12

MARCH 1988

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

CORDIAL RECEPTION IN YUGOSLAVIA

WHAT'S GOING ON IN PERSIAN GULF?

From our special correspondent

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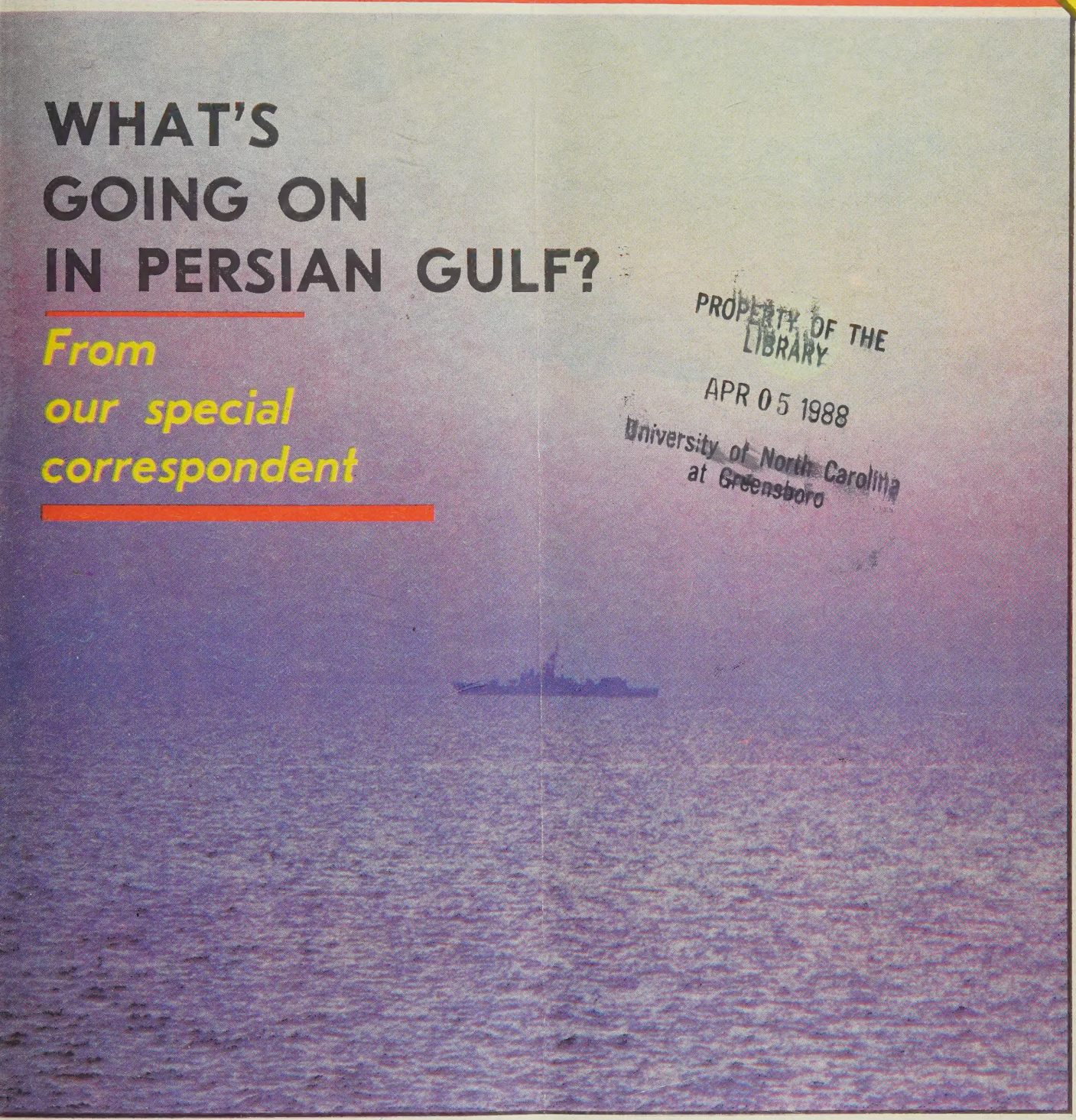
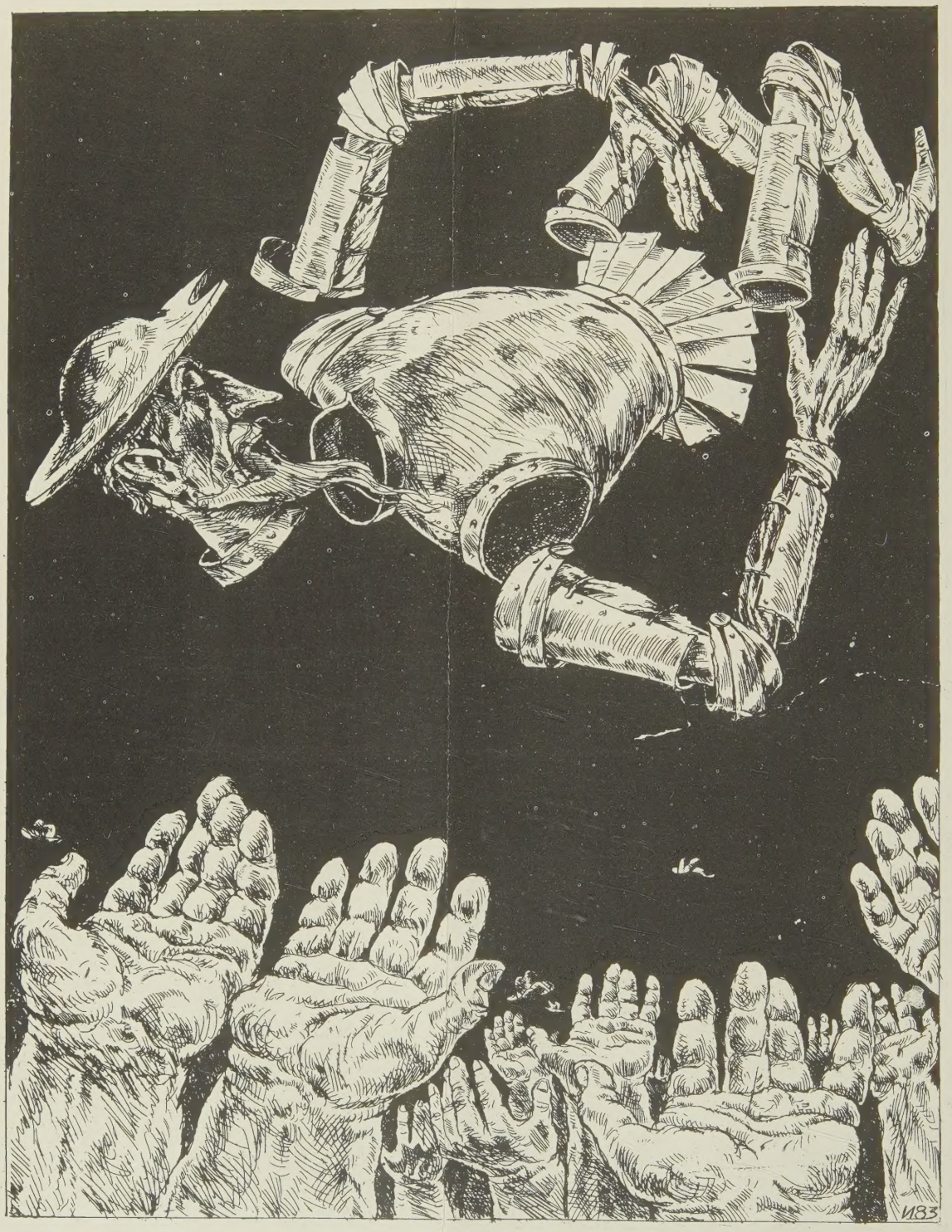


U.S.A.: A NEW GENERATION OF THE DEMOCRATS



Drawing by Igor Smirnov

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Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, negotiating with the leaders of Yugoslavia in Belgrade.

See pages 5-7 for our correspondent's reports on the Soviet-Yugoslav summit regarded as a landmark in the relations between our two countries.

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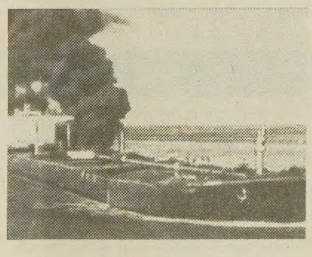

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PEACE

The absurdity of the "if-you-want-peace-prepare-for-war" principle is now more obvious than ever. But old prejudices die hard. It is a shame that many people still regard nuclear arms stockpiles as a factor in security. Somehow it fails to come home to them that one cannot uphold the right to life by sowing death.

December 8, 1987, has gone down in history as a watershed between the old logic of the balance of fear and new thinking. It is the first step towards a better future in which concern for man will triumph and mutual respect among nations will be a norm.

May the philosophy of good will and common sense - "if you want peace prepare to beat swords into ploughshares" - prevail!

Luigi Redaelli
Seriate, Italy

●

The signing of the INF treaty by the leaders of the two great powers has brightened the world for the first time in many years. Thanks to the treaty, there is now hope for deep cuts in long-range strategic weapons. The U.S.S.R.'s contribution towards the success of the summit is truly inestimable. Now that the ice has been broken, we are confident that all nuclear weapons will one day be scrapped.

Isao Ashiba
Tokyo, Japan

VIEWPOINT

Revolutionary changes known as perestroika are now under way in your country. Perestroika is an impulse to your advance towards the communist society of the future. The U.S.S.R. has always been unremitting in its efforts towards this goal regardless of the obstacles in its way. It is becoming clear to everyone that anti-Soviet campaigners are already disappointed by the fact that your nation is taking the initiative in working for universal and complete disarmament all over the planet. I am certain that this objective will be attained sooner or later.

I am also convinced that perestroika will continue in spite of those who wish it ill. The Soviet Union has always achieved the aims it sets itself.

This is how it has always been and this is how it will be this time, too!

Jose Villaciervos Calvo
Baracaldo, Spain

HUMAN RIGHTS

Certain Western quarters have been working for years, under the pretext of protecting human rights, to bring about a solution to what they call the problem of emigration in the U.S.S.R. These people have become positively tedious. Why are they so sure that almost every other Soviet citizen is anxious to defect? I think the idea behind this slanderous fuss is to try and slow down the improvement in East-West relations, denigrate the Soviet Union and thus demonstrate the most dubious advantages of the Western way of life.

Fedosy Kuzko
Amur Region, U.S.S.R.

REPERCUSSIONS

Thank you, Vladimir Mironov, for your article "A revolutionary by calling" (No. 43, 1987) about Ché Guevara, our heroic guerrilla. It's great that people in the Soviet Union realize what kind of person Ché really was: a humanist, a genuine revolutionary internationalist and a sincere friend of the Soviet Union.

I have the impression that little is so far being written about Cuba in the Soviet press, New Times included, although hundreds of Soviet experts live and work in Cuba and they have seen our life for what it really is. I hope that you will give more attention to your real friends, the Cubans!

Jose I. Roque Marrero
Camaguey, Cuba

●

I was impressed by the interview with Dr Brian O'Leary, Chairman of the U.S. National Space Council (No. 4, 1988). In his book "Mars 1999" he discusses the prospects for a flight to Mars by two crews - one Soviet and the other American. Then came a letter from a Sierra Leone reader ("Mars can wait," No. 7)

READERS' QUESTIONS

GLASNOST
FROM OUR MAILBAG

Why do we confine ourselves to post-factum nationwide discussions of certain important decisions that concern us all? I think such decisions should be put to a popular vote instead, so that everyone can have a say on the subject.

N. Galkin
Pyatigorsk, U.S.S.R.

What arouses the envy of Canadian workers is the right to work guaranteed by your constitution. Recently, however, I read a story in the Globe and Mail which said that there are now quite a few "jobless in the fully employed society," and that "many Soviets are under threat" as a result of the economic reform now being carried out in your country.

Can this be true? Or is it merely a question of streamlining the state machinery? Is there hope of re-employment for those deemed to be in non-productive jobs?

Harry Cook
Kentville, Canada

I've just come back from New York, and I can tell you quite frankly that many of its streets are a shabby sight today. A thin veneer of wealth can no longer conceal the ulcers underneath. The system reigning in the U.S. dooms some people to abject poverty and ignorance; they are denied the right to respect and human dignity.

As far as I have been able to gather from your recent publications, Soviet readers have had an excessive diet of reports on unemployment and homelessness in the U.S. But can you have too many stories on the subject of social injustice?

Barbara Fenoglio
Turin, Italy

Our country has submitted a proposal to UNESCO that the millennium of Christianity in Russia be celebrated. Why don't you publish in this connection an interview with Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia? I should like to know what contribution the Russian Orthodox Church has made to a lasting world peace.

V. Vorobyov
Djezkazgan Region, U.S.S.R.

suggesting that the money required to carry out the project should rather be spent on solving mankind's mundane problems. This talk is as old as the space age. Why should we venture into space, the sceptics argued right from the start, with so many problems to deal with on earth? These arguments have been smashed by the record of space research. Man has succeeded in breaking away from his mother earth and is now making himself at home in near-earth space. Before very long he will feel cramped there, too. What sounds like science fiction today - the moving of ecologically pernicious industries to outer space, the orbiting of huge solar power stations, the mining of minerals on asteroids - will ultimately become a reality. The flight to Mars is to mark the first step in making these ambitious dreams come true. Therefore the earlier it is carried out, the sooner we shall be able to use all that the solar system has to offer.

Vladislav Stolyarov
Penza, U.S.S.R.

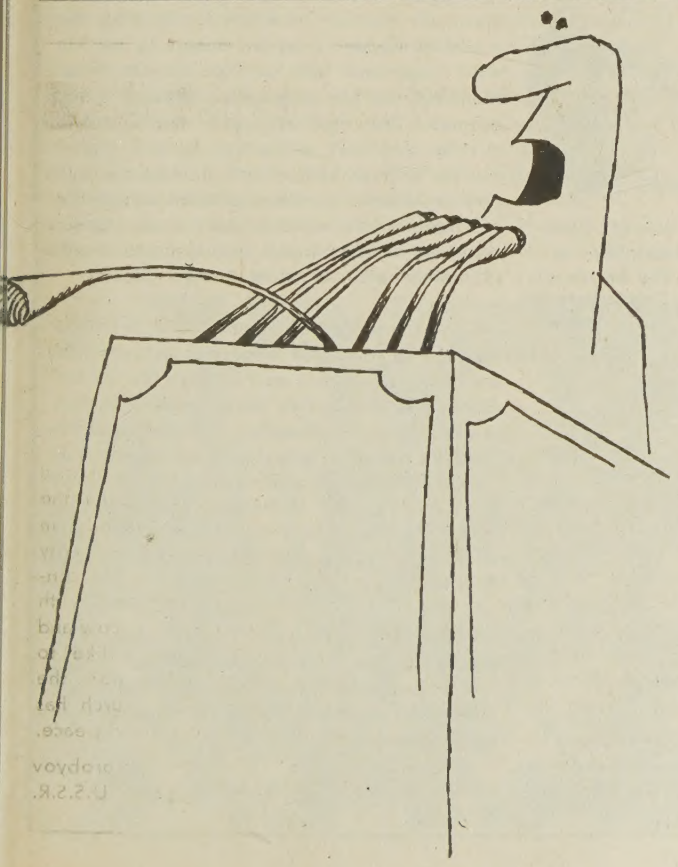
●

I welcome the decision of your government to withdraw the limited Soviet troop contingent from Afghanistan, and I hope that the forces working for a reasonable and peaceful national coalition will prevail in that country.

However, the problem of regional conflicts remains - and not through the Soviet Union's fault, either. In South Korea alone there are tens of thousands of U.S. troops, with an arsenal that includes nuclear weapons. A decade ago President Carter announced the withdrawal of these troops, but they have remained there to this day. When I discussed this problem with a member of the U.S. peace movement, he told me with bitter irony: "I'm sure that by the time the first GI leaves South Korea, there will already be peace in Afghanistan."

Walter Horner
Berlin, G.D.R.

AN ARTIST'S COMMENT



Drawing by
Vadim Konoplyansky

EDUCATION

I agree with you 100 per cent (see No. 4, 1988) that a great deal depends on the schoolteacher and his effort. There are millions of schoolchildren in our country today. The teacher is supposed to have a personal approach to each and bring out his pupils' interests and inclinations. While teaching a youngster practical skills, the teacher must not lose sight of his soul; it is my conviction, therefore, that the emphasis should be on humanitarian problems. These should be aired in a lively atmosphere of spontaneous discussion - a form of instruction we have somehow forgotten - because as one argues, one learns. The schoolteacher's prestige must be enhanced not by high-sounding talk but, above all, by a genuine recognition of the vital role he plays.

I. Baleyev
Ufa, U.S.S.R.

●

There is considerable controversy today over the educational reform in our country. I have just read the article "Requiem for half-knowledge" by V. Tomashkevich, D. Sc. (Econ.) in your issue No. 6, 1988. There is no denying the crucial importance of this matter for our entire society. It was not for nothing that the latest plenary meeting of our Party's Central Committee gave it its undivided attention. I would like to say a few words in this context.

Educational reform should not be confined to a mechanical change in pupils' age qualifications. The important thing is not the age at which they become eligible for primary schooling, but the way in which they are taught. Instead of cramming information into the heads of highly receptive six-year-olds, the school must systematically encourage them to do independent thinking. From nursery age on, a child should be trained in the basic techniques of mnemonics and autosuggestion. Educating a child in general, and teaching him to behave in particular, is of no less importance. What's the situation now? Every schoolteacher wastes too much time on keeping order in class. With our children, self-discipline is not an intrinsic need, but a teacher-imposed regulation to be complied with. Something must be done about that. A scholteacher must concentrate, first and foremost, on developing children's abilities, with their psychological and intellectual peculiarities taken into account. Children will make better academic progress if by the time they enter school they are already able to make a concentrated effort to learn and efficiently memorize, process and synthesize the information they are offered. I am sure that as a result schoolchildren will have more spare time in which to concentrate on sports and work training. The rising generation should not be afraid of the computer (as many adults are). It is bound to become common in our schools before long.

Our education system stands in need of a radical reform which must be carried out as soon as possible. The matter is urgent.

Alexander Stepanov
Kerch, U.S.S.R.

PRIVATE OPINION

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

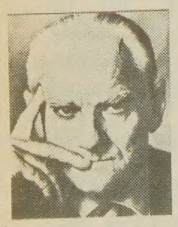
RUBEN DARIO SOUZA, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Party of Panama

My attention is now riveted on the events taking place in our country. It should not be imagined that they are merely an incident in its relations with the United States. Washington has much broader strategic interests in the region. The West has recently been talking of the Pacific as an important geopolitical region expected to acquire still greater significance in the 21st century. It can be asserted that Washington is today acting in Panama with this factor in mind.

The problem is that the United States is not going to retreat and lose its strategic position in the isthmus. The treaties signed by Torrijos and Carter provide for a gradual reduction of the U.S. presence in Panama till the end of the century. Washington now wants to revise this provision, in other words, to conclude a new pact with Panama. This can be done only in agreement with the authorities here. That is why Washington urgently needs a docile government in our country.

The question of power in Panama is also urgent because the United States is going to use it as a base from which to counter the national-liberation movement throughout the continent. Since Washington is pursuing its policy in Latin America from a position of strength, it needs a military springboard there and the guarantee that this springboard will still be there in the 21st century.

■



ALBERTO MORAVIA, Italian novelist

Life today is extremely volatile. Things are constantly happening in the world. I find it hard to name the highlight of the week and can only share with you some of the thoughts that have occupied my mind over the past few months, weeks and days.

Mankind is still young. It has a lot of things to do. Why, then, has it created and preserved nuclear weapons? For war? But that is nonsense. In past wars, there were victors and losers. There will be neither in a nuclear conflict. The nuclear weapon is not a means of defeating an enemy. It is a means of destroying life: culture, nature, people. Are all of us aware of this danger?

Selfishness is characteristic of the young. To what extent are the sovereign states prepared to sacrifice part of their interests for the sake of mankind's survival? I do not deny patriotic feelings. Every people has its homeland. I am against nationalism, its manifestation in politics and in everyday life. A patriot who loves his country will come to love the Earth and outer space, whereas a nationalist will not.

Or take technology and ethics. Travelling round the world, I see how rapidly it is changing in many respects. Modern technology is penetrating into various spheres of life, renewing or changing them. It has brought outer space closer to man, and from outer space man has taken a closer look at the Earth. But have we looked deeper into the human soul? Have we made progress in comprehending the most vital problem of the past and the present - the problem of man, his attitudes, aspirations and inclinations? I have lived 80 years and another week, and still cannot answer this important question.

■

HIDEO DEN, member of the House of Councillors of the Japanese Parliament for the Social Democratic Alliance

I would single out the preparations for the ratification of the Washington treaty. The maximum exertion of effort for ridding the world of nuclear weapons seems to me the most important task at the present time. Mankind now has an excellent chance, in my opinion. But medium- and shorter-range missiles are only a fraction of the global nuclear arsenal. Radical cuts must be made in intercontinental missiles, missiles carried by submarines and surface ships, and nuclear weapons of other types, so that mankind will ultimately reach absolute nuclear zero.

I think it will be extremely difficult for the Soviet and American leaders to achieve that by their own efforts exclusively. The United States and the Soviet Union regard nuclear weapons as a powerful and dependable means. To give up this means voluntarily is as hard for the two powers as for a man to cut off his right arm. But if the arm is affected by gangrene and represents a threat to his health or even his life, he goes to the doctor and asks him to amputate it.

If the people of the world loudly voice their desire to live without the nuclear threat, I think both the United States and the Soviet Union will decide to have their "nuclear right hands" amputated.

A milestone

Our own correspondent reports from Belgrade

The official friendly visit of Mikhail Gorbachev to Yugoslavia ended in the city of Dubrovnik on March 18. The caressing southern sun added its warmth to the hospitality of the reception and the atmosphere of trust, mutual understanding and respect that was characteristic of the visit.

The General Secretary of the CPSU spent almost five days in Yugoslavia. He met with workers at the Ivo-Lola Ribar engineering plant in Belgrade and the Iskra electronics and electromechanics association in Ljubljana, had talks at the Zemun Polje institute of maize growing, and familiarized himself with the achievements and problems of the socialist republics of Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia.

The talks with top party and government leaders wound up with the signing of a joint declaration. Based on the time-tested principles of the Belgrade Declaration of 1955 and the Moscow Statement and Declaration of 1956, it has enriched them with new content.

In the promotion of our relations with Yugoslavia, we are prepared to go as far as the Yugoslav leadership wishes, Mikhail Gorbachev stressed in Belgrade. Lazar Mojsov, Chairman of the Presidium of Yugoslavia, pointed out in his turn that the Yugoslav leadership adheres to the same position, based on well-known principles, in its relations with the Soviet Union.

Mikhail Gorbachev's visit aroused immense interest. Upwards of 600 correspondents for news agencies and radio and television companies arrived in Belgrade. It should be said that meetings between Soviet and Yugoslav leaders have always evoked special interest worldwide. The big changes on the international scene and the important processes taking place in the domestic life of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia alike imparted a special atmosphere to the Gorbachev visit.

Yugoslavia supports the Soviet initiatives aimed at curbing the arms race and achieving universal peace. Playing a considerable role in the non-aligned movement, it greatly contributes to the maintenance of stability in the world, especially in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, and this finds a favourable response in the Soviet Union.

The Yugoslavs are showing great interest in the reforms being carried out in the Soviet Union, and the wide range of initiatives being conducted under the party leadership for the transformation of society. Shortly before Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Yugoslavia, his books "Perestroika and New Thinking for Our Country and the World" and "Perestroika - the Vital Cause of the People" were published in the Serbian and Croatian languages.

Announcing the publication of these books in Yugoslavia, Boris Muzevic, Executive Secretary of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, noted that in them the General Secretary of the CPSU had made a profound analysis of the social and political changes taking place in the internal life of the Soviet Union. These important processes are expressed in the words "perestroika" and "glasnost," which are now famimliar throughout the world. They are bound to create a new quality in the economic and political development of the country.

We are carrying out perestroika for ourselves, Mikhail Gorbachev noted in Belgrade. It has grown out of our conditions, internal and external. We are not imposing our methods on anyone, though we see and understand the interest shown in it throughout the world. In the course of perestroika we are also recalling the past, Gorbachev went on. We are doing so in order to draw lessons so that negative phenomena are never repeated. We know who is to blame for these phenomena and have frankly told the people. A great deal was done for the normalization of Soviet-Yugoslav relations by Nikita Khrushchev and Josip Broz Tito. It was a far-sighted step. On the basis of the principles worked out by them, our countries were able not only to normalize their relations but also to move considerably farther.

Our countries and parties attach great

A scene in Belgrade's Friendship park
Photo by S. Smirnov

importance to the promotion of bilateral relations, seeking to enrich them with new content. Exchanges of delegations are being conducted under the programmes for direct contacts between various republics, regions and cities of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and cooperation is being established between ministries, departments and industrial plants.

Trade and economic ties between the two countries have developoed on a wide scale. The volume of trade amounted to 18.1 billion dollars between 1976 and 1980, and exceeded 32 billion dollars between 1981 and 1986. Since 1975 the Soviet Union has been Yugoslavia's biggest foreign trading partner.

About 100 industrial plants have been built in Yugoslavia with Soviet economic and technical assistance, and production cooperation is being established between enterprises of the two countries. The first agreements on the building of a joint Soviet-Yugoslav plant to manufacture measuring instruments for the oil and gas industry and on joint capital investment, were signed in 1987.

There are also difficulties in the economic relations between our countries. They should not give rise to alarm. It is always a pity when they arise through our miscalculations. But many problems have arisen because of the world market situation. Moreover, some traditional forms of cooperation are beginning to outlive themselves. Therefore it is necessary to search for new forms and to expand specialization and cooperation.

Efforts are already being made in this direction. Djordje Hadzi-Mihailovic, Deputy Federal Secretary for Foreign Trade, told me that they would help not only to overcome existing difficulties, in particular, the Soviet Union's deficit in its trade with Yugoslavia, but also to raise economic relations between the two countries to a qualitatively new level.

Both countries are very interested in conducting joint research, carrying out joint scientific and technical projects and building joint enterprises to produce goods to be marketed in third countries. An impetus to the development of these progressive forms will be given by the programme for Soviet-Yugoslav economic, scientific and technical cooperation till the year 2000, signed during Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Yugoslavia.

Multiform Soviet-Yugoslav relations have an eventful history. Prerequisites are now appearing for raising the cooperation between our countries to a higher level, giving it a new quality and making it more dynamic and effective.

VLADIMIR GRISHNY

Bridges

Our special correspondent reports on present-day Yugoslavia, its achievements and problems.

"Of all the things man builds... there is, to my mind, nothing better and more worthwhile than bridges...Bridges are erected for public use, they .are always built with forethought where the need for them is particularly keenly felt...They last longer than other structures, and are designed for no secret or evil purpose." This observation by the great Yugoslav writer Ivo Andric, author of the novel "Bridge Across the Drina" .came to mind when the contours of the famous Visegrad Bridge have come into sight amid shreds of twilight mist through the window of our bus. For 400 years the witness to the march of events, that bridge has become a symbol of the continuity of time and the links between national cul?.tures and peoples.

Visegrad is situated half way between Dubrovnik and Belgrade. My bus journey from the Adriatic town to the capital was a surprise sprung on .me by the caprices of the weather: owing to heavy mists the Belgrade airport was closed and flights there had been diverted to Dubrovnik. The Yugoslav airline JAT had provided a caravan of three buses to take all the stranded, Belgrade-bound passengers to the capital.

The almost 14-hour bus journey would have been an excellent opportunity for me to interview my fellow passengers had they not taken advantage of their numerical superiority to interview me instead. They literally showered me with questions. Thus, during the very first hours of my stay in Yugoslavia I was given ample evidence of the keen interest of the Yugoslavs in all that is happening in the Soviet Union.

My fellow-travellers wanted to know everything - about perestoika, about the economy, and about what is new in literature and the cinema... .About the Soviet Union's attitude to Yugoslavia, and why Soviet journalists do not write more about that country.

Sixth sense

My own questions were answered later, in Belgrade.

Twenty years had passed since I first came to the Yugoslav capital to attend a course of lectures as a graduate student at Belgrade University.

Much has changed in the Yugoslav capital since then. On Marshal Tito Street there now towers an elegant high-rise building that looks as if it had been carved out of dark mother-of-pearl. Its lower floors are occupied by a vast department store. Not far from the Vuk Karadzic cultural centre, also brand-new, the world's biggest Russian Orthodox church, the St. Sava Cathedral, is being built on funds donated by believers. On Knez-Mihajlova street, in the city's downtown, a pedestrian zone, known as the "corzo," something like our Arbat, has been opened. In New Belgrade there is the Sava Palace of conferences. The first European forum after Helsinki was held here, and more recently it was the venue of a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Balkan countries.

The face of the city is constantly changing. But its character remains unaltered. Belgrade is as it always was - hospitable, cordial and throbbing with life. Most of the people you see are well and stylishly dressed. Traffic is very heavy everywhere, and finding a parking space is quite a problem.

The good humour and geniality prevailing in the streets is not a facade, not a disguise for some other mode of life. It is a reflection of the national character. True, the tendency to engage in passionate arguments - with or without cause - is also an innate characteristic, but in these arguments, however serious, there is always a place for a joke or an ironic remark. The "sixth sense" of the Yugoslav is not intuition but humour - a sense of humour that bespeaks a remarkable joie de vivre, vitality, the ability to cope with life's troubles with relative ease, to overcome difficulties and the problems arising from them.

Problems... I must admit that it is not easy for me to speak of Yugoslavia's problems. After all, for a long time our information about that country was anything but abundant. And in the information that did reach us , its difficulties and problems all but predominated. With the dearth of glasnost at that time and not being too well informed about our own problems, it seemed to us that Yugoslavia had more problems than we or the other countries building socialism. And our explanation for this was not that the Yugoslavs were simply more frank in admitting their difficulties, but that, even though they were building socialism, they were doing so in their own way, not our way and hence most likely the wrong way. We believed implicitly in our immunity from mistakes and crisis phenomena, believed that, being the ones that knew the truth, we were closer to it than others.

But those times have passed. And rejoicing in the successes of our friends, we treat their difficulties with understanding.

Money - new and old

In our country you will rarely find anyone who counts money in terms of its former value. More than a quarter of a century has passed since our monetary reform. Yugoslavia's took place twenty three years ago. But why even today, after so many years, people still go by the old count remains a mystery. All price lists and price tags in shops are in new dinars, yet if you ask the salesman how much something costs, the answer is bound to be in old dinars.

By the same token wages of, say, 17,000 new dinars became 17 million! An impressive figure. Here is an interesting sidelight: I was told that in Slovenia where the living standards and wages are higher than in other republics, the tendency to count in "old money" is less marked.

Should this custom perhaps to some extent be a reaction to the fact that income lags behind the cost of living, a reflection of a yearning for a return to the days when money was worth more. According to the IBRD survey, published in Yugoslavia's press, the per capita national income in the past seven years dropped from 2,620 dollars in 1980 to 2,070 dollars last year.

The decline in living standards is due mainly to inflation. In the opinion of both journalists and scientists, inflation is problem No. I. It mirrors the unsatisfactory state of the economy, and is in one or another way at the bottom of all the other problems. The main efforts of the government are therefore concentrated on combating inflation. As a matter of fact, the economic programme adopted last November with a view to regulating economic relations is called the Anti-Inflation Programme.

The measures introduced by the government have produced some results. A certain livening of the economic situation is to be observed. And although the rise of prices has not been fully checked, the rate of inflation has been brought down.

Steps are being taken (though not always effectively) to protect those hardest hit by the rise in prices - pensioners, invalids and children. The trade unions help workers to buy food at lower prices. Inexpensive meals are obtainable at many factories. Some products can be bought at reasonable prices in private shops or at the market where, with competition and a little bargaining skill, one can buy goods more cheaply than in the regular stores.

At least half of the 6,700,000 people engaged in the public sector add to their basic income by part-time work after their regular working hours.

There is little talk in Yugoslavia today about achievements, although there are such. Suffice it to mention the rich "harvest" of the tourist season and also the good showing made by the automobile industry. Or the fact that there has been a reduction - true, by no more than two per cent - in the unemployment level. In the present circumstances this is no minor achievement. However, the "success stories" have been relegated to the background. Analysis of problems and the search for solutions come first. There is no time to lose. For, a protracted crisis could undermine Yugoslavia's main achievements - all that the country has accomplished in the years of the advance along the road of socialist self-management.

Basic to the programme for the stabilization of the economy are maximum development of self-management, the independence and responsibility of the enterprises, promotion of the market and market relations, raising the efficiency of production, and radical improvement of its technological base.

In the vanguard

The solution of the country's problems depends in large measure on the activity and resolve of the Communists. Yugoslav Communists hold that the strength of the Party lies primarily in unity, not mechanical or formal, but effective unity based on dedication to common goals. Unity does not exclude discussion in the search for the truth, but it must be constructive discussion aimed at the speedy and effective solution of urgent problems. The Yugoslav Communists are self-critical and demanding in their assessment of their work; they expose shortcomings and mistakes, violations of inter-party democracy and bureaucratic tendencies that erode the prestige of the Party among the masses. The Communists also have to combat elements within the League of Communists of Yugoslavia who call either for renunciation by the Party of its vanguard role, the role of the "collective brain" of the working class and the working people in general, or for turning it into a "party of power," an instrument for the exercise of total control. These tendencies, Ivica Racan, member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the League said, must be countered by a rational and thoroughly substantiated policy aimed at the restructuring of party work. A restructuring that would ensure the possibility and the moral right of the League of Yugoslav Communists to be the vanguard of society.

The League of Communists is seeking to mend the rifts in society that appeared during the years of crisis - between peoples and nationalities, between republics and territories, between the developed and the more backward areas, between the leaders and the masses. The Party must be the main builder of bridges that would help to close these rifts. Hence the importance at this juncture of the unity, the cohesion of the Communists.

In the opinion of the Yugoslav Communists, the reasons for the negative phenomena lies not in the system of self-management, as the enemies of socialism contend, but in the fact that the principles of self-management were not applied to the full. If the workers go on strike, the Party weekly Komunist observed, this means that they do not feel themselves to be the masters of the enterprise. And, after all, the prestige and influence of the Party, as was pointed out in the political report of the Central Committee at the 13th Congress of the League, are in proportion to the extent to which its ideological and political activity expresses the interests of the working class.

Of course the crisis has become protracted. And the dissatisfaction of the working people with the present situation is great. The number of strikes has increased in the past year. The country's international relations remain rather complicated. The economic difficulties are affecting also the political system.

The principal task today is to overcome the crisis, the negative tendencies in the development of society. The League of Communists must be in the focus of public attention, it must be the driving force of the renewal and democratization of society, it must not allow any fusion of the party and the state machinery, it was stressed at the recent plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the League. All these questions will soon be discussed at the forthcoming conference of the League of Communists.

Tested by time

What Andric said about bridges I recalled more than once also in the context of the relations between our two countries and peoples.

The outward tokens of these ties are the Lada, Moskvich and Samara cars to be seen on the roads of Yugoslavia and the Moscow trolleybuses which, along with their counterparts of other origin, provide passenger service on the streets of Belgrade.

The stability of the relations between our countries is also attested to by Yugoslav experts' evaluation of these ties and the prospects of their development and by the warm cordial welcome Yugoslavia has accorded to General Secretary Michail Gorbachev.

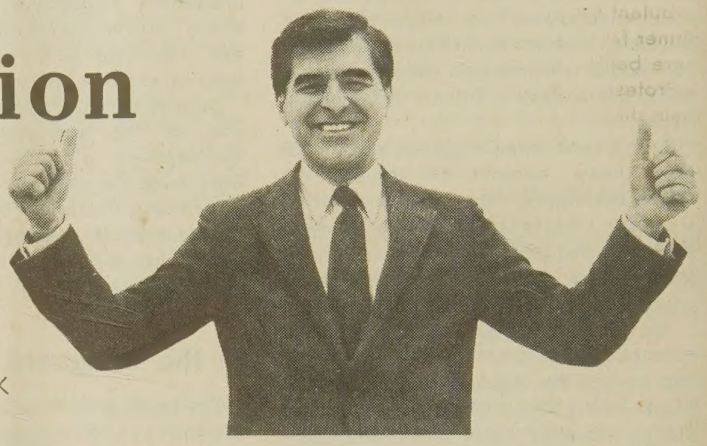
Soviet-Yugoslavian summit talks and their results open up an entirely new stage in the development of relations between the two contries. Whatever the sphere of our cooperation, it invariably serves to further consolidate the bonds of our time-tested friendship.

ROSTISLAV ZOLOTAREV

Belgrade-Moscow

March 8, 1988, was Super Tuesday, the day when 20 states took a clear-cut stand on each presidential hopeful and indicate the most likely nominees. In the lead this time among the Republicans was Vice-President George Bush, who outran his main competitor Robert Dole, the Senate minority leader. The leader among the Democrats was Michael Dukakis, with Jesse Jackson and Albert Gore hard on his heels. We have already introduced the Republican contestants (see No. 7). Today the New Times focuses on their Democratic rivals: Bruce Babbitt, ex-Governor of Arizona, Jesse Jackson, one of the leaders of the black civil rights movement, Michael Dukakis, Governor of Massachusetts, Representative Richard Gephardt, Senators Albert Gore and Paul Simon.

New-generation Democrats



So far Michael Dukakis is in the lead.

IRINA KARAGANOVA and VLADISLAV ZUBOK

"In the 1980s the custody of the nation's leadership will be transferred from the World War II veterans, who have held sway for a generation, to a new set of men and women. These newcomers ... are the products of a set of experiences different from those which shaped the dominant American personalities of the past quarter-century... The next ones who will take power - the babies born between 1930 and 1955 - were shaped in a very different time. Theirs has been a time of affluence and inflation, of extraordinary educational advance, and of wrenching social change and domestic discord." That was how, seven years ago, leading U.S. journalist David Broder began his story about the new constellation of aspirants to national leadership. Yet history makes a mockery of forecasts: soon the presidency went to Ronald Reagan, both in terms of age and world outlook a man of the older generation moulded by McCarthyism and the ideology of the cold war.

Now that Reagan's presidency is coming to an end, the U.S. is again beginning to talk about "a change of generations." The 1988 electoral campaign is a chance for "dark horses" to try their luck. This is particularly true of the Democrats who, in the course of two difficult decades, lost several of their political stars, among them Hubert Humphrey, Robert Kennedy, George McGovern, Edmund Muskie, Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, Edward Kennedy and others.Four years ago, unseasoned campaigners Gary Hart and Jesse Jackson made a sudden splash. Now other, until recently obscure, politicians are following in their footsteps.

The "new forty-year-olds"

In their social background - Democrats of the new generation or, as they have been called the "new forty-year-olds" - are in striking contrast to the party leaders of the older age group. They are nearly all people with university education, highly competent professionals - lawyers, journalists, advertising men, media experts and members of the academic community. Those whom they are to succeed hailed from large metropolitan areas and - less frequently - from small towns and have from the start staked their political careers on trade union support. The parents or relatives of some of them were union militants or victims of the Great Depression - working-class immigrants, small shopkeepers, farmers, clerics and rural schoolteachers. The present Democrats are members of the so-called new middle class, well-to-do, though not excessively wealthy. They are children of affluent American suburbia.

Since F.D. Roosevelt, the political complexion of each generation of Democrats has been determined by attempts to remodel the nation's social and political foundations in line with their liberal views. The "new forty-year-olds" entered politics at a time when the liberals were making what was perhaps the most desperate attempt in American history to cure or at least mitigate inbuilt social ills. The failure of such plans was fresh in their memory: the collapse of the Great Society in the 1960s, the Vietnam war, the Watergate affair and the total failure of the reformers in the Carter administration to cope with economic difficulties.

Let us now recall what some of the New Democrats, now about to battle for the White House, were doing in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Nearly all of them were involved in the peace movement or in sympathy with it. Gary Hart was a close associate of George McGovern who ran for president on a platform that was fairly left-wing by U.S. standards. Joseph Biden was active in Robert Kennedy's campaign headquarters. Michael Dukakis was involved in the citizens' movement against governmental corruption and for the protection of consumers rights. He founded a network of ecological organizations in his native Massachusetts. Albert Gore first campaigned against the war in Vietnam and then served as an army reporter there. Patricia Schroeder, a Congresswoman from Colorado joined the hippies in the late 1960s, hitchhiked across Europe and was involved in the Paris Spring in 1968.

The Kennedy brothers and Martin Luther King were a legend for many of the New Democrats. Bruce Babbitt is a veteran of the Peace Corps founded by John Kennedy and took part in the famous march for civil rights and the desegregation of the racist South.

"My generation having reached the conservative age of mortgage payments, pediatrician bills and concern about our children's welfare," Joseph Biden says, "are ripe for Republican picking. These experts believe that like the Democratic Party itself, the less-than-40-year-old voters have prepared their souls for some security, real or illusory. They misjudged us. Just because our political heroes were murdered does not mean that the dream does not still live, buried in our broken hearts."

The New Democrats came of age in the turbulent atmosphere of the 1960s when former family, religious and moral values were being challenged.

Protestants or Catholics, many of them in their student days indulged in Buddhism and Zen Buddhism, oriental mystical cults, and travelled to Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Congressional statistics show that the younger Democratic Congressmen have been abroad much more frequently than their colleagues thirty years ago.

There are many women among the New Democrats.

All this has changed the face of the Democratic Party. The "forty-year-olds" are proving more open to novel ideas, abandoning ideological provincialism and a simplistic approach to complex problems, and showing more flexibility and pragmatism.

Southerners on the march

The current change of generations in the Democratic Party is taking place against the background of regional shifts. Previously, New York Democrats linked with Wall Street banks and New England manufacturers, known for their political traditions, acted as generators of novel ideas in managerial practice. In other words, the Northeastern and Mid-Western groups were predominant in the party. Today representatives of the Sun Belt, the South and the Southwest, are playing an increasing role.

Behind this shift is a complex demographic process - the migration of the population into new, not fully developed areas, the transfer of capital to places where the unions have always been weaker and cheap manpower more abundant. Since 1982 seventeen seats in the U.S. Congress have gone from the Northeast to the Sun Belt states. An additional 12-15 seats are expected to go to them after the 1990 census.

It is not for nothing that the media show interest in Californian and southern Democrats. In California, for instance, Alan Cranston succeeded in the 1970s in creating a powerful political machine where numerous "young" Democrats are now engaged, including former members of the liberal left and even the radical left. They are being more and more consistently promoted to key positions in the party, particularly in the House of Representatives. Their efforts, however, sometimes pale before the mighty drive launched over the past few years by their colleagues from the South. At the Democratic conference in Boston in April 1986, the above-mentioned David Broder said that the South was now in motion and that its soft-spoken orators, holding their audiences spellbound, were on the march to Washington. In fact, this process began back in President Carter's days.

In the last few years the southern Democrats have formed an organization of their own, independent of the party's national committee - the Council of Democratic Leadership. It was they who agreed to hold primaries where the future of presidential hopefuls would be determined in all 12 southern states on the same day, March 8. A group of wealthy real estate men, headed by the Virginian businessman Nathan Landow, has launched a contest for the strongest southern candidate on the Democratic ticket and intends to help him push his way into the Oval Room.

Jesse Jackson has both black and white Americans among his supporters. Photo from Time magazine (U.S.A.)

The growing influence of the Sun Belt is making itself felt in the party's political priorities.

California and - recently - the South have displayed a stronger spirit of aggressive enterprise and petty-bourgeois democracy dating back to the 19th century. They have always been the last (except the Pentagon contractors) to feel any need for the federal government's services and were the first to campaign against the growing burden of federal taxation: the anti-taxation movement originated in California in 1978. The key to political power there is winning the votes of prosperous white suburbanites, 30 to 40 per cent of whom are politically noncommitted, not affiliated to any party and tend to vote for the most flexible and independent politician who does not seem to take his orders from the local party machine or the Washington establishment.

Both parties are putting up a hard fight for these votes. It is interesting in this connection to what extent the New Democrats have absorbed Reaganism, yielded to its influence and reconciled themselves to its consequences.

In the same boat with the Reaganites!

Three possibilities were open to them: to join the administration in charting the national course under the flag of Reagan-style conservatism; to criticize this course and gradually get ready to take over the initiative as soon as the Republicans are played out or back down; to try to advance a real political alternative.

A retrospective glance shows that the New Democrats have not offerred genuine opposition to Reaganism. This stems primarily from the weakening of the left wing of their party. The most radical and active left-wing groups have long abandoned the Democrats, and some of them are now acting hand in glove with the "New Right" Republicans. Left-wing young people are not joining the party. Democratic left liberals are particularly concerned about the decline of their influence on the campuses.

Conservatism in the country and hostile pressure from the right have caused the "new forty-year-olds" to stop cooperating with left-oriented politicians for tactical reasons. This was demonstrated by the 1984 electoral campaign when the black minister Jesse Jackson, a left-liberal candidate, and the vast majority of new-generation Democrats found themselves on opposite sides of the fence in party politics.

In the early period of the Reagan administration the New Democrats attempted to participate in charting the administration's course. Some Congressmen from their ranks voted for Reagan's bills and even co-sponsored them. What was expected from the Democrats was nothing short of surrender to the right-wing conservatives and the

"New Right." For their part, Reagan's followers made no secret of their intention to oust their rivals completely from the process of national decision making. Many relatively young and vigorous leaders who had belonged to the Carter administration were viewed as enemies. On the other hand, most of the New Democrats were separated from the right-wing conservatives not only by the logic of the party political struggle, but also by a cultural and psychological distance.

The upshot is that few have taken the path of collaboration with Reaganism. Most of those who have were experts on military matters. They said that in supporting bills for new military programmes they were attempting to restore to the Democratic Party a tough face in foreign affairs.

In other words, the majority of the New Democrats have avoided both open opposition to the government and direct cooperation with it. This majority has adopted a cautious wait-and-see tactic of trench warfare against the powerful right-conservative rival at the helm of executive power. In so doing, it has changed its platform. Under the influence of Reaganism, the Democrats have given up their orientation towards big government spending on aid for the needy. That was partly due to the enormous deficit in the federal budget, brought about under the Republicans by bloated military programmes. At the same time, the New Democrats criticize the practice of administrative and distributive relations between the government and needy Americans. As a result, they say, federal bureaucracy has expanded, the poor have found themselves tied to the federal feedbox and deprived of any motivation to look for jobs, and there is a growing number of unmarried mothers who find it more "profitable" to subsist on welfare benefits.

In this connection, the New Democrats deem it necessary, first, to ensure an economic growth which, like a swelling tide, would "lift all boats" and, secondly, to "invest in man," i.e., in the retraining of workers and the education of children from poor families.

The New Democrats have borrowed some "remedies" for social problems from the "New Right." They seek to decentralize the management of social programmes and turn it over from the federal bureaucracy to state admininstrations, charity institutions and large corporations. Another borrowed idea is that non-taxable government welfare payments should be available only to those who are "really needy" rather than to all U.S. citizens.

At present the New Democrats are trying to take over the economic initiative from the Republicans. They agree that it was necessary to rid private enterprise of "the chains of government control in its former shape." Nevertheless they do not propose renunciation of the government's intervention in economic affairs. Otherwise, in their view, the U.S. economy will not become competitive and will be unable to vie on its home ground with goods from Japan, Taiwan and South Korea. According to Michael Dukakis and Bruce Babbitt, the government should not coerce but guide, not command but direct and encourage corporations towards "maximum efficiency," it should draw workers into the division of profits and stimulate their interest in greater producfivity. New Democrats are prepared to learn from anyone - from the followers of Thatcherism in Britain to the Japanese managers.

As for foreign and military policies, the New Democrats' positions bear traces of old party divisions between the "doves" and the "hawks." There is a group made up of Sam Nunn, Les Aspin, Albert Gore and some other hard-liners. There is another including Senator Christopher Dodd and Congressman Stephen Solarz as well as relatively young onetime experts from the Carter team - Richard Holbrooke, Anthony Lake and Robert Hunter. They don't mind looking "firm" either. But not at the expense of a search for compromise with the partner, constructive negotiations and the development of mutually profitable East-West trade.

Some points of convergence have recently emerged between the two groups. The New Democrats have been greatly influenced by the perestroika in the Soviet Union and the Soviet leadership's foreign policy initiatives. They support the INF treaty signed in Washington. Most of them adhere to the "strength and negotiation" formula and are prepared to sacrifice many strategic programmes contemplated by the Reagan administration, including SDI, to consolidate arms control. The Democrats are against a "broad interpretation" of the ABM treaty and there is strong opposition among them to military aid to the contras.

Thus, the New Democrats have still been able to withstand the pressure of Reaganism without losing their ability to introduce constructive elements into the nation's domestic and, especially, foreign policy. Now let us see if they have adequate political will and are able to act purposefully and vigorously, overcoming obstacles and personal disillusionment in both their struggle for power and their struggle for a political line.

The "guts factor"

These properties are far from irrelevant in assessing an American leader. They amount to what the Americans call the "guts factor."

This factor moved into the foreground even before the electoral campaign. Some developments have highlighted the personal psychological characteristics of the new generation of Democratic aspirants. Many of them have proved too vulnerable as individuals and are not accustomed to direct psychological pressure.

The New Democrats are essentially children of a socio-psychological atmosphere strikingly different from that of the 1940s, 1950s and even the early 1960s. The retiring generation of politicians was, according to the late John Kennedy, "hardened by war, disciplined by peace." They did not hesitate to stake their futures on a career, the nation's might and U.S. economic expansion. The present generation entered politics in the aftermath of the "Vietnam trauma" and Watergate. They have not yet had a chance to display their initiative in government leadership, while history has already tested them for strength and loyalty to ideological principles. They have had to dissociate themselves from the America of rebellious students, leftists and counterculture and adapt to another America where conformism and chauvinism have triumphed again and where money and brute force are again respected...

The developments of the 1970s and early 1980s produced a painful psychological change in many politicians. In the case of the New Democrats it was aggravated by the fact that it was superimposed on changes in the value systems and world view of the social milieu they hailed from.

Greater openness and desire for self-determination have caused new-generation politicians to renounce many ideological dogmas and stereotypes of their predecessors and made them potentially sensitive to new political thinking. Yet the incipient socio-psychological situation has cut the traditional ground from under their feet, thus preventing them from displaying their personal will power in politics.

What can reconcile a professional political activist to the hardships he has to endure? This is a standard question posed by American sociologists. The following replies are cited: for some it is a means of self-expression, for others it is like an exciting game. In the sociologists' view, it is hard to stand firm on such a moral-volitional foundation, and disillusionment can easily drive one out of politics into another domain where personal feelings and self-respect are not so badly hurt.

Needless to say, the sociologists' conclusions do not all apply to the New Democrats. We would not follow the example of some American commentators, who describe them as "too selfish," "heartless," "weak," etc. For, many of them have an impressive record of participation in protest movements and various public initiatives which called for self-sacrifice and a certain amount of courage.

Clearly, as the electoral campaign gains momentum, it will show whether the present "forty-year-olds" have sufficient staying power and whether the Democratic Donkey will prove to be a worthy rival to the Republican Elephant.

PANORAMA

INDIA

Punjab restive again

THE PUNJAB QUESTION WAS NOT ESPECIALLY HIGH ON THE AGENDA OF THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT'S SPRING SESSION, UNTIL AN ABRUPT RECURRENCE OF SIKH EXTREMIST OUTRAGES EARLY THIS MARCH LENT IT THE UTMOST URGENCY.

MPs are discussing legal, administrative and political measures that will enable the authorities to resume control over developments in Punjab, where presidential rule was introduced last May. Various forms of administrative and police action have been suggested, violent ones among them, to neutralize the Sikh extremists who want Punjab separated from India and the independent state of Khalistan formed there. Judging from its statements, however, the Indian leadership is going to resort to other methods of restoring peace in the region.

"The Indian government," Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi told a joint session of both houses of the Indian parliament, "is prepared to use every opportunity to achieve a settlement in Punjab and to resume democratic processes there in the interests of the Sikh and Hindu communities."

It is prepared to do so despite the new, extremely ruthless and defiant Sikh terrorist outrages which have taken nearly 400 lives since early this year alone, despite the failure of the Indian government's repeated attempts to enter into a dialogue with moderate Sikhs and thus set the stage for a political settlement in Punjab. One such attempt was the release from prison, late last year, of Prakash Singh Badal, a prominent figure of the Sikh Akali Dal Party. The authorities were counting on his good offices in negotiations with the more sober members of the Sikh community. Once out of prison, however, he joined in the attacks on the government's policy in Punjab.

In March the Indian government set free forty of those captured by the Indian troops four years ago as part of Operation Blue Star (clearing the Golden Temple, the main Sikh shrine in Amritsar, of terrorists). Five high priests at this temple were also released. These moves met with popular support in Punjab.

The response from the country's political quarters was mixed. The leadership of the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party, for instance, is of the opinion that the Prime Minister has made unjustifiable concessions to the extremists. This is hardly a manifestation of the party's adherence to its principles, however. Its leaders, like those of some other bourgeois opposition parties, are in fact not particularly anxious to see the situation in Punjab return to normal; instead, they seek to use the absence of a settlement there to undermine the prestige of Rajiv Gandhi and his government.

Indian Communists take a different approach to the Punjab issue. With the country's national unity in jeopardy, Rajeswara Rao, General Secretary of the National Council of the Communist Party of India, said recently, Communists are voicing their readiness to launch, jointly with other parties,a campaign for territorial integrity, with the involvement of the broad popular masses and all patriotic forces that present a united front to the separatists. The Communist Party of India has called on all parties to convene a national conference with a view to the joint elaboration of urgent measures towards peace and stability in Punjab.

SERGEI IRODOV

BANGLADESH

Up the blind alley

THE RULING NATIONAL PARTY LED BY PRESIDENT ERSHAD, THE RETIRED GENERAL WHO USURPED POWER IN A MILITARY TAKEOVER IN MARCH 1982, HAS WON A LANDSLIDE VICTORY IN THE PRE-TERM GENERAL ELECTION.

The outcome was a foregone conclusion as only seven parties and groupings without influence competed against the ruling party. The main opposition forces, including the Awami League and the Nationalist Party, which had governed the country at different times in the past, boycotted the election. They do not believe there can be any fair expression of the popular will under the present administration. The mass protest movement is demanding that Ershad resign and transfer power to a neutral interim government capable of conducting a fair and honest parliamentary election.

Bangladesh is experiencing an extremely acute crisis. The frequent national hartal strikes, the endless mass demonstrations in town and country, and the picketing of government offices have disrupted all normal political and economic life.

Last December, yielding to opposition demands, the president dissolved the 19-month-old parliament and announced new elections. However, the opposition continues to press for the resignation of Ershad and his cabinet.

Yet another national strike was held immediately before and on the polling day in response to calls from the opposition. Factories stopped work, municipal transport did not run, shops and markets closed, and streets were deserted. According to the Bangladesh Observer, not a single voter turned up at six polling stations in Netrakona. Opposition leaders claim that only a small proportion of the electorate went to the polls. "The people," they maintain, "rejected the elections," which were nothing but a "farce."

However, spokesmen for the ruling classes assert the reverse. Ershad says the elections went off "calmly and decently," while Vice-Premier Mohamad Abdul Matin contends that they were "mostly peaceful and honest," adding that "only" five people were killed and some eighty injured during the vote, - although the opposition puts the toll much higher.

In short, though the early general election is over, it has obviously contributed nothing to the attainment of the political stability the country so definitely needs. Bangladesh is still the scene of bitter confrontation between opposition and government. Hence, the deadlock continues; while the opposition presses for Ershad to resign he just as obstinately declines to do so.

VLADIMIR PUCHKOV

The nuclear deterrence myth

The concept of global security and disarmament did not win support at the recent NATO summit. Nevertheless, Bonn approved the results of the meeting. It was necessary to demonstrate the unity of the Western alliance. However, the verbosity of the concluding speeches failed to conceal existing differences.

Bonn regards the concept of "flexible response" as the only reliable basis of security. In accordance with this concept, NATO, if attacked, would first use conventional arms, then the tactical nuclear weapons deployed in Europe, and, finally, the U.S. strategic forces would be brought into action.

It is, of course, understood in the Federal Republic that even the most "innocuous" war scenario – without the use of nuclear weapons – is fraught with disastrous consequences. Therefore, Bonn continues to stress that the concept of "flexible response" is purely political – a means of averting war, not a plan for the conduct of hostilities. The aim is to show that NATO has a sort of "nuclear amulet" menacing to the enemy – the U.S. strategic potential that would protect Western Europe in a contingency.

Guarantee or bluff?

But today the NATO zealots in West Germany feel they have been abandoned. Passions ran high over the Ikle document, worked out at the Pentagon's request by a group of American experts and politicians consisting of former Undersecretary of Defence Fred Ikle, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, generals John Vessey and Andrew Goodpaster, and a theorist of "deterrence," Albert Wohlstetter.

The document was allegedly to become the groundwork for shaping U.S. foreign policy for the next 20 years, and its full text is being kept secret. However, the excerpts quoted from it confounded West German foreign policy makers. The key idea of the document is that the West Europeans should defend themselves and, if the worst comes to the worst, with the aid of U.S. nuclear weapons sited in the continent. But they need not count on U.S. strategic forces. In an interview with the West German newspaper Rheinischer Merkur, Fred Ikle was even more explicit. The U.S. nuclear guarantees, he said, should not lead to the risk of self-destruction for the sake of aid to West Germany.

Bonn was perplexed to see the "nuclear amulet" prove unreliable. In its opinion, the American tactical missiles that will remain in Europe after the evacuation of intermediate-range missiles are incapable of ensuring a reliable deterrence because they can hit targets on German soil only, thereby destroying what they are supposed to protect.

It might seem reasonable therefore to propose starting talks with the Warsaw Treaty on the elimination of tactical missiles. However, Bonn rejects the idea on the pretext that the Warsaw pact has vast superiority in conventional armaments.

Nevertheless, NATO became suspicious, aware that the present situation in the Federal Republic, impelling Bonn to search for an alternative to nuclear deterrence, makes it a weak link in the Atlantic chain.

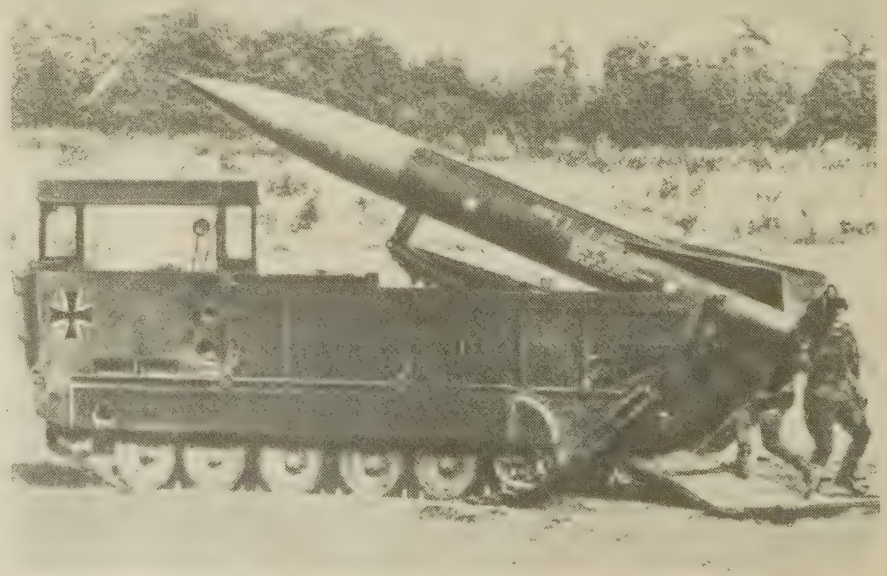
To dispel the fears of the NATO allies, Chancellor Helmut Kohl said at the Brussels meeting of the bloc that his government was not striving for a "third zero option," for the denuclearization of Europe or for nuclear-free corridors. But the risk and burden of the responsibility ought to be distributed evenly among the members of the Atlantic alliance. In particular, Helmut Kohl called for talks on the reduction of all tactical weapons in Europe to equal "ceilings."

What's on the scale?

While Bonn is worried about the present situation, the other members of the alliance are quite satisfied with it. For instance, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher does not conceal that she regards West German territory as the main battlefield, with all the ensuing consequences for the population. When you are on the main line of defence, you naturally become the first victim, she said in an interview with the ITV on the conclusion of the Brussels session.

Washington is trying to allay the anxiety of its West German ally. Rosanne Ridgway, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs, regards the presence of 300,000 GIs with their families in West European countries as sufficient proof of the link between Europe and the United States.

It is, however, justly asked in the Federal Republic what Washington will do on



In the opinion of Defence Minister Manfred Wörner, the nuclear short-range Lance missile will remain effective till 1995, when the question of its radical modernization is expected to arise. But are these rockets necessary even in their present state?
Reproduced from the magazine Vorwärts (F.R.G.)

finding 300,000 GIs on one side of the scales and all Americans, 300,000 GIs included, on the other? Will Atlantic solidarity stand the test of loyalty? President Reagan assures us that it will. He said that the proposals of the Ikle group had been discarded and that U.S. guarantees to Europe remained unshakeable.

But what will the next president say? How will he treat the concept of "differentiated deterrence"? U.S. foreign policy is inconsistent and can hardly be predicted, and this, I think, is one of the reasons why the Federal Republic is beginning to try to find its own way in international affairs and think about a new basis for its security.

Though many in Bonn are still unable to escape the hypnosis of "nuclear deterrence," most West German politicians agree that the new situation created by the abolition of intermediate-range missiles in Europe will call for a revision of some of the decisions adopted by NATO in the past.

It was in vain, however, that they expected the Brussels session at least to outline a joint concept of disarmament. The leaders of the bloc confirmed once again that the maintenance of the deterrent potential and the buildup of military power was for them more important than détente and arms control.

The majority of NATO members insist on implementing the decision adopted by the defence ministers at their meeting in Montebello, Canada, in 1983. It was agreed then to reduce the U.S. nuclear arsenal in Europe from 7,000 to 4,600 missiles and to modernize tactical missiles at the same time. Defence Secretary Frank Carlucci pressed for the implementation of the second part of the decision at a recent meeting of the military scientific society Wehrkunde in Munich. But of the West German participants in the meeting, only Manfred Wörner, the future secretary-general of NATO, showed any understanding for this demand.

Helmut Kohl keeps repeating that he sees no pressing need today for the modernization of missiles, while Franz Josef Strauss considers this politically impracticable because of the strong public opposition to any military programmes. Elections are soon to be held in Baden-Württemberg and Schleswig-Holstein, and the CDU and CSU leaders understand that modernization is not a vote-winning platform. Besides, the Chancellor is to meet Mikhail Gorbachev this year, and in the eyes of the Soviet leader he does not want to look as if he is advocating bypassing the INF treaty.

General-Anzeiger, a newspaper close to the foreign ministry, believes that at the Brussels session the West German delegation enlisted the support of other NATO partners. Indeed, the word "modernization" was deleted from the documents. NATO diplomats spent a whole night drawing up a joint declaration which says that deterrence should be ensured by a combination of conventional and nuclear arms, and, moreover, that these arms should be kept up-to-date.

The word "up-to-date" was found at Kohl's insistence, and in the unofficial German translation it means "at an appropriate level." But what level should be considered appropriate? Disagreement on this issue remains. While Bonn regards the existing level as appropriate, Margaret Thatcher sees the English expression "up-to-date" as an unequivocal demand for the modernization of tactical nuclear missiles.

At the concluding press conference she said that the communiqué set before the NATO defence ministers has the clear objective of adopting in the nuclear planning group a specific programme for replacing the present nuclear arsenal, the service life of which expires in the mid-nineties, with more sophisticated weapons. Nor were the NATO leaders able to find a common stand on the issue of talks on the reduction of tactical missiles in Europe.

Sham reduction

On the face of it, the opposition to talks on the reduction of tactical missiles in Europe does not look logical. The West asserts that the ratio in weapons of this type is 1 to 15 in favour of the Warsaw Treaty: only 88 American Lance missiles against nearly 1,400 Soviet battlefield systems.

In fact, the Americans have far more missiles than was believed only recently. According to Der Spiegel, there are almost 2,000 Lance missiles in Western Europe, with about 600 of them carrying nuclear warheads. Inasmuch as several other nuclear systems – air-, land- and sea-based – are deployed on the continent besides the Lance missiles, it is clear why the West does not want to part with tactical missiles. American nuclear artillery is being upgraded, and the United States is deploying in West Germany new nuclear shells with higher accuracy and a longer range.

Other projects have not been shelved either. The United States has long been working to develop a longer-range Lance-2, also to be deployed in the Federal Republic. Work is currently under way on a new tactical system, ATACMS, with a 270-km range of action, and on entirely new missiles capable of hitting targets at a distance of nearly 500 kilometres, that is, close to the limits of operation of the INF treaty. They will not only replace the obsolescent Lance missiles, but also increase the total number, as supreme NATO commander in Europe, John Galvin, demands.

The air force is also to be equipped with new American nuclear arms, in particular, an air-to-ground missile with a range of up to 400 kilometres. Moreover, in a critical situation it is planned to fly strategic B-52 and F-111 bombers, equipped with cruise missiles, across the ocean in addition to the bombers stationed in Britain.

Jürgen-Gerhard Todenhöfer, a member of the Bundestag's foreign policy committee, says that priority should be given to airborne and sea-based cruise missiles with a 2,500 km range, and to the equipment of the Bundeswehr's Tornado fighter-bombers with nuclear arms as "compensation" for the medium- and shorter-range missiles to be scrapped under the INF treaty.

These nuclear arms, NATO strategists plan, will be able to destroy the objectives on which the Pershing 2 and cruise missiles were and are still targeted.

Plans of this kind are actively backed in London and Paris, which understand that the process of nuclear disarmament will sooner or later affect their potentials too. Whatever the two capitals may say about nuclear weapons as a factor of stability and deterrence in Europe, they are to all intents and purposes a prestige symbol for them, a pass to the superpower club, engendering a feeling of political superiority over the economically stronger Federal Republic.

In this evidently lies the secret of the "nuclear amulet" which the West is extremely anxious to preserve. But is the West aware of its deadly effect, both for those who possess it and for their allies?

NIKITA ZHOLKVER
our own correspondent
Bonn

Mumin Kanoat:

Lahore impressions

In an interview with a New Times reporter the Soviet poet Mumin Kanoat describes his recent visit to Pakistan and feelings there about the Afghan problem.

I was invited to mushairahs - a poetry festival arranged in Lahore under the auspices of the Faiz Foundation. Faiz Ahmed Faiz was a distinguished poet of the Hindustan Peninsula, a great friend of the Soviet Union, a holder of the International Lenin Peace Prize, and a co-founder of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization.

The Lahore festival brought together almost all eminent Pakistani and Indian poets writing in Urdu. After the festival we met many Pakistanis and had interesting conversations and arguments with them.

What views on the Afghan problem did you hear in Pakistan?

Afghanistan was a widely debated subject. I had very frank conversations with representatives of the left-wing democratic forces. Some of them admitted they had initially been puzzled by the Soviet decisions to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. Is the Soviet Union really abandoning the country? Is it right that the Afghan government will not be made up exclusively of the progressive forces who came to power after the April revolution?

But gradually they understood that Kabul's policy of national reconciliation and the Soviet Union's decision to pull out its troops offer the shortest way to the peace badly needed by the Afghans. The Soviet Union is not abandoning Afghanistan. It has always been and will continue to be a good neighbour and friend to the country. It will be a guarantor of a non-aligned neutral Afghanistan, which is what the majority of the people want to see.

My Pakistani acquaintances understand the need for settlement particularly well as hundreds of thousands of Afghans are living in their country. Most people feel pity and sympathy for the refugees. As for members of the armed groups, they do not behave as befits guests. In general, the presence of refugees is a social and economic burden for the country.

When the conversation turned to Islamabad's interference in Afghan affairs, my hosts pointed out that the country's foreign policy was determined by a small ruling group.

But Pakistan has a parliament, the National Assembly. What is its role?

There are opponents of interference in the National Assembly. It should be borne in mind, however, that the chamber consists largely of landowners, high-ranking army officers and the national bourgeoisie, that is, advocates of official policy.

True, anti-government "sallies" have sometimes been made in the National Assembly. While I was in Pakistan, deputy Foreign Minister Yuli Vorontsov concluded his talks in Islamabad. Immediately after his departure a provocative question was raised in parliament. The Minister of the Interior declared that Soviet and Indian agents were involved in the numerous acts of terrorism and explosions in Pakistani cities.

One of the Senators then took the floor. What the minister has told us is absolutely unfounded, he said. If he has concrete facts, let him produce them. If there are no facts, all this is mere demagoguery.

I understood from my conversations and meetings with Pakistanis that they had for a long time felt deprived of many rights, and desired new breath of freedom. Given the national character, such a situation would, indeed, lead to an explosion in the widest sense of the word. And protest might assume more than just the form of civil disobedience campaigns, as it has done in the past few years. It could even take on an extremist character. Young members of the left-wing parties have gone through thick and thin: they have been arrested and gaoled and have seen their friends being executed.

In Lahore, I saw a film about Faiz Ahmed Faiz, produced jointly by the BBC and Pakistan film makers. It has horrible scenes showing the executions including that of a well-known student leader. I have said all this to show that some progressive young people could resort to extreme behaviour..

On Pakistani territory there are camps of Afghan counterrevolutionaries, and their leaders feel completely free there. Moreover, the population is not totally immune to anti-Soviet propaganda. Did you have any apprehensions?

Let me add that hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees have settled in various parts of Pakistan, and they have different attitudes to the Soviet Union. Frankly speaking, I was on the look-out. I was afraid of a provocation. But nothing of the kind happened.

On the evening of the day when the poetry festival closed, a concert was held at the Hamra hall in Lahore. The programme included reciations of Faiz's verses and performances of Pakistani classical musical pieces and songs. The British ambassador had arrived from Islamabad specially for the concert. He told us that he had lived in Iran and Afghanistan and knew a little Farsi.

When Iqbal Banu was signing old songs, a crowd of young people broke through the police cordon and packed the hall and all the aisles right up to the stage. Their mood was extreme and rather frightening. In a few minutes they began to shout to the famous singer: "Please, sing about inqlab (revolution)." She explained that she was a classical singer and did not know any revolutionary song. The young people began to wave their fists and chant: "Inqlab, inqlab."

Iqbal Banu had, after all, to sing songs about revolution, and after each song the young people chanted: "Murdabad (down with) imperialism, murdabad America, murdabad Britain." The British ambassador paled and told us that he had

to go to a diplomatic reception. He got up and quickly left. The young Pakistanis turned to us and began to chant: "Zindabad (long live) the Soviet Union."

Mushahid Hussein, a well-known Pakistani journalist, recently noted that no big anti-Soviet demonstration has been held in Pakistan over the past ten years. At the same time, any tension in relations with the United States led to demonstrations and outbursts of anger. In 1979 the American Embassy was even set fire to. Many Pakistanis evidently think well of the Soviet Union regardless of the official position. But let us turn to another subject. You visited Pakistan in 1975, when Bhutto was in power. To what extent has the internal situation changed since then?

I had the impression that the people are groaning under the yoke of the military regime they were police posts on two corners of the hotel where we stopped. Secret service agents kept vigilant watch on us, and we knew them by sight.

In 1975 the situation was, of course, different, and we could go wherever and whenever we wanted. Faiz Ahmed Faiz was then working in the Ministry of Culture. But, I remember, when we were shown round the Old Fortress built by Shah Jahan in Lahore, one of our hosts said: "You are now walking on the roof of the prison where Communists are kept. We do not know what is awaiting them: execution or life imprisonment." I want to say that outward freedom and mild leadership concealed repressions and cruelties invisible to foreigners.

What has changed in the appearance of cities and in people's way of life since 1975?

In Lahore, several high-rise buildings, mainly expensive hotels, have been erected in recent years. An influx of foreign tourists had been expected. But the Afghan war and government measures complicating entry into the country have upset these plans. Pakistan has not become a tourist venue, and the hotels are mostly empty.

Outwardly, the shops have plenty of quality goods - local, imported and contraband. But when I inquired about the state of the economy, the statistics was deplorable. Many able-bodied men go to Arab countries in search of living. Recently, however, the economic situation in the oil-producing countries of the Middle East has changed for the worse, and Pakistanis have begun to return home.

The problems have grown more acute. I inquired about government agrarian policy, land reform in particular, and was told that there could be no talk of reform because almost all of the land is owned by a handful of families, with the rest of the rural population being either landless peasants or peasants with tiny plots. Landless peasants are moving to towns in search of jobs.

I was shown huge slums in the outskirts of Lahore. Were it not for artificially created sources of financing - I have in mind billions of dollars received by Islamabad from the United States and other Western countries owing to the war - the Pakistani economy would collapse. In this, I think, lies one of the reasons why Islamabad is putting forward unacceptable proposals at the Geneva talks with Kabul in an attempt to delay a settlement of the Afghan problem. ■

Agreement not signed yet

It was expected that an Afghan-Pakistani agreement on the settlement would be signed by March 15, with the withdrawal of Soviet troops, as announced by Mikhail Gorbachev, beginning two months after this deadline.

The Afghan-Pakistani talks are being held in the Palace of Nations behind closed doors, and the situation at them is known only to the negotiators themselves and the U.N. Secretary-General's personal envoy Diego Cordovez. He is a mediator and link betwen the two delegations, which occupy separate rooms several dozen yards apart on the second floor of the palace. Shuttling between the two rooms, Cordovez acquaints each delegation with the proposals and position of the other, and tries to bring about agreement.

When the delegations, tightly surrounded by blue-uniformed U.N. security guards with walkie-talkies, appear on the second floor, reporters are already waiting for them on the way from the lift. They want to hear at least something from them in the hope of clarifying what is impeding progress. Sometimes a member of one of the delegations - which arrive for and return from the talks - 30 minutes apart from each other so as not to meet - stop to reply briefly to one or other question.

"Progress at the talks does not depend on me, it depends on the other side," Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zain Nourani replied not long ago when asked why no progress has been made. This is obviously an attempt to put the blame for the lack of progress on the Afghan side.

This apparently impelled the Afghan delegation to explain the real state of affairs. At a press conference for journalists accredited to the Palace of Nations, Afghan Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdul Wakil clearly indicated the chief obstacle, namely, the Pakistani insistence on discussing the question of a future Afghan government and of halting Soviet military aid to Kabul simultaneously with "the symmetrical ending of aid to the Afghan opposition forces."

Abdul Wakil also stressed that the formation of a coalition government was the domestic concern of the Afghans and could not be discussed "either in Washington or in Moscow, or in Geneva." As regards Soviet aid to Afghanistan, he noted that it was given under agreements concluded long ago between the two sovereign states, whereas the United States was giving aid to groups of Afghan terrorists.

One other important fact emerged. Before the present round of talks began, Kabul and Islamabad had decided not to raise issues over and above the agreements, as this would have distracted the negotiators from their ultimate goal - the ending of the bloodshed in Afghanistan and the settling of the regional conflict.

The Soviet Union also reacted to the hitch in the talks. Speaking in Geneva on March 10, special envoy Nikolai Kozyrev stressed that the entire responsibility for the delay in the talks lay with Islamabad. The raising of issues not on the agenda, he said, could not only block the talks but also trigger off a new outburst of bloodshed in Afghanistan. And that must, of course, be avoided at all costs.

YURI KOSINSKY

Geneva, March 15

On shore and at sea

Notes on the "tanker war"

From our special correspondent
TIMUR GAIDAR

In terms of personal experiences, the most memorable one was that of transferring from ship to ship.

In February harsh winds blow across the Persian Gulf. The Gulf is none too deep, and the winds whip it up easily. A six-oar craft, a captain's boat or a motor launch rocks on the waves as it sneaks up to the sheer steel lee-side of a ship. The gangway now comes within arm's reach, now it soars heavenwards.

Timing must be perfect. Easy does it. Keep your eye on the bottom rung, wait for your chance, get ready to jump... Jump!

On board, I walk along the deck enjoying the secure feel of the firm planking underfoot and climb onto the bridge to shake hands with the captain. Vivid signal flags flutter on their halyards saying: "Thanks for cooperation, happy sailing!" The two ships part company.

Over the month of my mission, I visited a dry-cargo vessel, a trawler, a rescue tug, a hunter-killer, a refrigerator ship and a tanker.

The windy, sun-flooded Gulf is crowded. The horizon is virtually never clear. Tankers crawl along, one by one and in convoys, flying the flags of various countries. North-bound ones "travel light" and rise high above the water, and those sailing southward, to the Strait of Ormuz, are heavily laden and ride low, with only their multi-deck superstructures visible.

Warships patrol the Gulf in great numbers, and helicopters circle overhead. From time to time hawk-like Phantoms whine menacingly through the air.

On occasion, the eye picks out a strange islet of perfect, foamless, waveless calm on the sparkling choppy surface of the white-streaked Gulf. It is an oil slick from a missile-pierced or mine-crippled tanker. A bright-orange spot on its greasy surface turns out to be a torn Mae West.

Let me give you a chronological acount of my travels.

Moscow-Kuwait flights leave every Thursday morning.

9:30 a.m. Frost-bound birches and the red dots of runway lights embedded in snow rush past the jet as it revs up for take-off. Airborne at last, it breaks through the clouds within seconds into a shining kingdom of sunshine and mother-of-pearl.

12:20. The Mediterranean looks as cold from above as an enormous sheet of zinc-

plated tin, with golden-brown honeycakes of islands scattered about it.

14:10. Tufts of tiny clouds, barely discernible from the altitude we've climbed to, hover above the red desert. Their shadows, however, are sharply defined and bluish-black. The shadows crawl across the sands, resembling the infantry skirmish lines of old.

15:30. A bird's-eye view of Kuwait is like a gigantic diagram. A smooth tract of brown is criss-crossed with glittering pipelines and the black strips of motorways. Man-made lakes shimmer in the sun like tiny mirrors. Thin white factory chimneys, crowned with pink tongues of flame, are like candles on a birthday cake...

All this is brand new, as if built all at once, to a uniform design, on another planet, with no remaining traces of previous life. True, as the plane noses down to land, I discern a scattering of Bedouin tents below, each with a Toyota, a Mercedes, or a Land-rover parked beside it.

High-rise in the centre and tapering off to two-storey level in the suburbs, the city snuggles up to the Persian Gulf. Freshwater tanks on its flat house tops sparkle like dew drops. The oil terminals - Ahmadi, Shuaiba - lie further south.

Kuwait the city and Kuwait the state are almost synonymous: the capital and its suburbs account for a million of the country's 1.7-million-strong population. One of the modern world's most interesting countries, Kuwait has gone all the way from abject poverty to fabulous wealth in three decades, and I feel a strong urge to tell the reader its "success story": how it struck it rich; how it uses its new-found wealth; what problems have arisen; how the sudden leap forward has affected the nation's age-old traditions; what the Kuwaitis are thinking and doing about this...

While I stayed on shore waiting for a Soviet ship to call at the port, I had a chance to tour the country. Local roads and modern cars being what they are, it takes literally a day to see all of it - the northern part before lunch, and the southern part, after it. I met, and chatted with, many interesting people: a Kuwaiti university professor; a camel merchant; an old salt; an oil refinery engineer. Regrettably, I have to put off sharing my experiences for a later occasion and confine myself to saying that I have been accorded a cordial welcome everywhere, and that, to my pleased surprise, my hosts have turned out to be well-informed about the important processes now under way in our country.

Kuwait was the first Persian Gulf country to have established diplomatic relations with us following the visit to the Soviet Union twenty-five years ago of the present Amir Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al Sabah - then Kuwait's Minister of Finance and Economy. Since then, political, economic and cultural relations between our two countries have been making good progress. A member of the non-aligned movement, Kuwait conducts a balanced foreign policy. Its stand on many international issues, including such vital ones as nuclear disarmament, methods of settling local conflicts, an agreement on the Indian Ocean (which would oblige the great powers to take the security of the region's countries into account, close down their military bases there and not set up new ones) and others is close to that of the Soviet Union.

For all the undoubted importance of this information to the reader, I must confess that I'd very much like to convey to him something else besides: the smell of the desert; the feel of fine sand crunching between the teeth; the sight of teakwood shavings curling at the tiny shipyard of the village of Doha, where the sharp-nosed "dow" boats are built; the soft purr of luxury limousines rolling along Kuwait's broad sea-front.

I am told that of a quiet night one can hear, in the northern part of that sea-front, the distant roar of cannons from the Iran-Iraq front.

After a succession of offensives and counteroffensives, the Iran-Iraq war, which began in September 1979, has now become a trench one, with both armies digging themselves in behind rows of barbed-wire entanglements and long stretches of minefields... It's like World War I re-enacted on a small scale.

Iran (population about 50 million) has numerical superiority, while Iraq (population about 16 million) possesses superior weapons - aircraft, in particular. However, neither side has enough resources to win the war, and blood just keeps flowing.

The dispute could well be arbitrated by an impartial international commission if the belligerents agreed to a ceasefire and the withdrawal of their troops behind internationally recognized borders. A proposal to this effect is found in Resolution No. 598, unanimously adopted by the U.N. Security Council last June.

Iraq has accepted the proposal. Iran has not openly rejected the U.N. Security Council's resolution but pronounced it inadequate in that it falls short of condemning Iraq.

Signs of it are very much in evidence here in Kuwait as well. Sentries stand guard at government office doors, machine guns cover the streets from house tops, armoured carriers lurk in entranceways, and belts of green-painted and dainty-looking anti-tank hedgehogs stretch out here and there across asphalted pavements like branches of a Christmas tree.

There are good reasons for such precautions. Acts of sabotage intermittently sweep Kuwait. A truck loaded with explosives tried to smash the Emir's car at the sea-front, killing the driver and several bodyguards and slightly wounding the Emir. Time bombs are laid under oil pipelines, and kill people in parks and cafés... In the holy month of Ramadan a bomb went off one night in the Rashid Shipping Company, a trading partner of the U.S.S.R. of 35 years' standing. Saad al-Rashid, the president of the company, told me that clerks had left the building minutes before the explosion. An errand boy of 13 who had stayed behind was killed.

Towards 1984, the international press's interest in the Iran-Iraq war began to wane. Coverage was reduced to occasional contradictory dispatches. Fierce battles were being fought somewhere far away, in Mesopotamia, in the Shatt al Arab valley... No sooner had hostilities spread to the Persian Gulf, however, than the war began to make front-page headlines again. This is understandable. Freedom of navigation in the Gulf is a matter of vital concern for many countries. It is the world's richest oil- and gas-bearing region, meeting a third of Western Europe's and two thirds of Japan's oil requirements.

In 1984, Iraqi planes began to attack Iranian tankers and the Iranian oil terminal on Kharg Island, the idea being to deprive Iran of hard currency and, consequently, to paralyze its war effort. Furthermore, the move could well have been intended to get other countries, dependent on Gulf oil, to bring pressure to bear on Iran to negotiate a peace settlement. Iraq felt less vulnerable in the Gulf: the bulk of its oil is piped to Mediterranean ports.

Iran responded by attacking tankers from other Persian Gulf countries, concentrating (since September 1986) on Kuwaiti ones.

Having handed in my passport, pinned a cellophane-encased pass to my lapel and gone through a horseshoe-shaped metal-detector, I walked up a flight of stairs to the executive office of the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company, the state organization in charge of all Kuwaiti oil traffic. I had an appointment with Abdul Fattah al-Bader, the president of the company, who did not keep me waiting a minute - Kuwaitis are noted for their punctuality.

Here are some of the notes I made during the talk.

"At the end of 1986, when the threat to shipping in the Gulf became fairly acute, we asked the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to grant our tankers

the right to fly the flags of their countries, or to charter some of their tankers to us. The Soviet Union gave us a hand at once. Frankly, we hadn't expected it to act so fast.

"Negotiations in Moscow and Kuwait were a success. A contract to charter three Soviet tankers was signed as early as March 1987. In April-May the tankers were already operational.

"Unfortunately, the tanker Marshal Chuikov struck a mine right at the start. It happened in Kuwait's territorial waters. There were no casualties.

"Outside our territorial waters, Soviet tankers are escorted through the Gulf by our warships.

"We are pleased with the Soviet tankers' performance. They are excellent vessels manned by expert crews. The contract runs for a year but will probably be extended."

Mr Bader and I did not discuss U.S. ships in the Persian Gulf. The story of the U.S. involvement there is common knowledge - thanks, in particular, to the American papers.

At first, Kuwait's request for permission to let some of its tankers fly the Stars and Stripes left Washington almost cold - whether because America imports from the Gulf only six per cent of its oil needs, or for other reasons. In any case, nothing happened for some time. After about eighteen months, however, the U.S. administration's attitude to the matter changed abruptly.

The fact that Moscow had been first to respond to Kuwait's request incited the U.S. to let 11 Kuwaiti tankers sail under American colours, according to Newsweek.

At the same time, the U.S. started rapidly stepping up its military presence in the Gulf.

"To defend 11 reflagged Kuwaiti vessels, the Pentagon had concentrated 29 warships, 14 support ships and approximately 24,000 men in and around the Gulf - an operation that, according to the Washington-based Center for Defence Information, costs about three million dollars a day," Newsweek told its readers on September 28.

The newspaper Washington Post said on the same day that after the Reagan administration started building up its military potential in the Gulf, its European allies had refused to follow suit and criticized U.S. policy as provocative and ill-considered. Now, four months later, the paper went on, almost all of them had sent ships. The paper quoted officials as saying that 70 allied naval vessels - the largest task force since the Korean war, i.e., in 35 years - had concentrated in the Gulf.

An oil refinery in Kuwait.

Before leaving Moscow, I visited the Main U.S.S.R. Naval Headquarters.

Commodore Mikhail Golubev looked up from the map of the Persian Gulf spread out on his desk. "The Americans know the composition of our naval force in the Persian Gulf prefectly well. It is an open secret. Ships are not needles, and the Gulf is not an ocean. We've got the following ships there - you may take notes if you wish - submarine hunter Admiral Tributs, destroyer Stoiky, mine-sweeper Turbinist, plus repair ship PM-24, the latter also flying our naval flag... Considering the situation in the Gulf, that's not much. Sometimes the repair ship escorts a Soviet merchantman through a dangerous zone. Nevertheless, we are not increasing the number of our warships there, just relieving them from time to time to give the crews a rest. Right now a mine-sweeper is on its way to the Gulf from the Black Sea to replace the Turbinist.

"The Soviet warships in the Gulf are supported by three merchantmen. The tanker Pamyat Lenina refuels them and keeps them supplied with fresh water, the refrigerator ship Karadagh brings in food supplies, and the rescue tug SB-408 sticks around, just in case.

"Soviet seamen perform their mission well, as I hope you will soon see for yourself."

Back home from the headquarters, I again consulted my clippings from American and Soviet papers.

The Washington Post of August 24, 1987, reported that the House Armed Services Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives had drawn up a report on U.S. actions in the Persian Gulf, saying that the U.S. administration's top priority was to restrict Soviet military penetration of, and presence in, the Gulf rather than to win back the confidence of moderate Arab regimes after the Iran-contras scandal or to put an end to the Iran-Iraq war.

This brings us to the question of ends and means.

Frankly, I don't feel like adhering to the old (and hardly the best) tradition which has, unfortunately, taken firm root in international journalism: to assume foreknowledge of the ultimate truth and proceed from the premise that only your own country's foreign policy line has always been and will ever be correct. Therefore I shall confine myself to sharing some of my baffling "whys" and to quoting official documents.

Shortly before the American armada set off for the Gulf, Marlin Fitzwater, the President's press relations aide, told newsmen that its chief mission was "to curtail the expansion of Soviet presence and influence" in the Persian Gulf, and that "these tankers will be ... entitled to the protection the U.S. Navy has historically accorded to U.S.-flagged vessels."

Well, aren't the navies of other countries also supposed to accord protection to merchantmen? It will be recalled that Soviet warships first appeared in the Persian Gulf in October 1986, after the Soviet motorship Pyotr Yemets had been attacked and detained. The danger to shipping in those waters has not diminished since then.

The Soviet naval force in the Gulf isn't all that large and shows no sign of growing. Why then do U.S. papers write about the mythical "thirty ships"? Why all this alarmist talk about the danger of the Gulf becoming a "Soviet lake"?

In July 1987, the Soviet government suggested that all the warships of states

not belonging to the region be promptly withdrawn from the Gulf, and that Iran and Iraq should, for their part, refrain from actions that put international shipping in jeopardy.

Some two months later, when it was clear that the departure of foreign warships would not put an end to bloodshed under the circumstances, the Soviet Union amended its stand on the issue and came up with a new proposal.

"The security of navigation in the Gulf can and must be guaranteed by the entire international community as represented by the United Nations," Eduard Shevardnadze told a session of the U.N. General Assembly. "Forces appropriate to this task are to be placed at its disposal if necessary."

So, the lucid and sensible objective is to guarantee the security of international navigation, and the logical way of attaining it is to form an appropriate international naval force in the Gulf and place it at the disposal of the United Nations.

Following the end of hostilities between Iran and Iraq, Eduard Shevardnadze went on to say, "foreign naval forces could be safely withdrawn from the Persian Gulf." This naturally applies to Soviet warships as well. So much for the "Soviet lake"!

This is worth reflecting on. For the first time ever, the East, the West and the non-aligned world could pool their military efforts for the understandable and noble purpose of protecting international shipping in the Gulf. Isn't it plain common sense to make the region a scene of such truly historic cooperation - and not another zone of latent confrontation between the great powers?

Vladimir Shevchenko, Izvestia correspondent in Kuwait, found in his archive a clipping from the newspaper Al-Rai al-Aam. In August 1986, when tensions in the Guilf were at their height, the paper wrote: "As a rule, great powers enact wars when they want a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of countries rich in mineral resources. Wars are known to lead to interference and to end in the establishment of new forms of colonial domination. The dangerous escalation of the 'tanker war' may turn out to be a prelude to wars of a new type."

...The squat white building of Kuwait's Foreign Ministry faces the sea-front. I walked past steel hedgehogs, machine-gun emplacements and sentries again, but forgot all about them when I was guided along a lengthy quiet corridor, lined with openwork carved doors, to the "douwainia."

At one time the douwainia was the part of a Bedouin tent that women were not allowed to enter. In a modern office it is a conference hall with low-slung sofas, pink-marble coffee tables, and a softly carpeted floor.

Vladimir Shevchenko and I had an appointment with Saud Mohammad al-Usaymi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. We arrived in early and whiled away the time in the douwainia drinking green tea from tiny, almost weightless, bubble-shaped glasses.

"The Minister is waiting for you!"

I shall now quote from my notes again.

"We proceed from the premise that responsibility for the protection of marine communications rests with the entire international community. This is exactly what the foreign warships now present in the Gulf are doing. Now the protection of Kuwait's territorial waters is the responsibility of our own armed forces. The other Gulf countries share this position.

The "dow": a traditional boat of Arab seafarers.

"The Soviet proposal that an international U.N. naval force be formed in the Gulf appears reasonable. Actually, Kuwait was the first to come up with this initiative. When the mining of international waters began in the Gulf, we suggested that U.N.-flagged mine-sweepers be sent in. I am sure the idea has lost none of its urgency since then. Now it is a bit quieter in the Gulf but it could well be the lull before a storm. The U.N. force should, first and foremost, answer its purpose and really ensure safety of navigation rather than simply to look on as is the case in Lebanon.

"There are difficulties, of course. The formation of such a force takes time, negotiations, and involves many problems. Navigation in the Gulf must be protected today, now."

Seagulls glided past the office window, their cries intermittently punctuating our conversation. A ship was leaving port. The Minister looked at the glittering surface of the Gulf, smiled sadly and shook his head.

"Kuwait was among the first to welcome the victory of the revolution in Iran. The Shah's regime had always sought to police our region. And now Iranian missiles hit our oil terminals. The paradox of it!"

...The lull the Minister had mentioned ended on the following day. The Arabian Times newspaper reported a new escalation in the tanker war. "Iraqi warplanes," it said, "slammed an Exocet missile into Cypriot tanker loaded with Iranian oil... The French-made Exocet missile punched a hole in the hull of the 225,000-tonne Coral Cape. The tanker was fully laden and sailing from Iran's Kharq Island terminal at the northern end of the Gulf."

The Gulf was back in the news. The inexplicable, crazy war went on.

Iranian gunboats seemed to have chosen the wrong target when they broke a six-day lull in attacks with shelling the 11,470-tonne Norwegian liquid petroleum and gas carrier Havpil chartered by Iran. Later, the tanker was attacked by Iraqi planes...

"Two gunboats bombarded the 157,849-tonne Panamanian tanker Topaz... They ordered the Topaz to stop its engines and then opened fire..."

I must confess that having cleared through the port's immigration desk, the customs and coast guards, and climbed on board the dry cargo ship Ivan Karateyev, I was reassured to find in my cabin a gas mask and a life jacket within easy reach of my bunk.

Discharge over, the ship's main engine came to life for a pre-departure warm-up, making the deck throb...

(To be continued)

Diplomacy and glasnost

Galina Sidorova

FOREIGN POLICY OFFERS NEW CHANCES

What attracted me to the meeting was a problem that had long preoccupied me. This was how the concepts of diplomacy and glasnost go together and to what an extent diplomatic "secrets"can be desclosed. I had the unexpected opportunity to draw certain conclusions when Yuli Vorontsov, Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister, agreed to meet a representative group from the Soviet public.

Though members of governments in other parts of the world, the West included, answer questions from the public, what is important here, I think, is not so much the fact that the meeting occurred, but the extent to which foreign policy chiefs are prepared to heed the voice of the public. The question of how well the voice of the public comes across is also important.

At this gathering a factory worker, a scientist, a retired general, a college student, a writer and an Imam aired their views on foreign policy problems. They were interested in Soviet policies with regard to the Iran-Iraq war, Afghanistan, the Middle East, and the prospects for a U.S.S.R.-U.S.A. agreement on a 50-per-cent reduction in strategic offensive weapons.

I was struck when the Moscow factory worker unexpectedly observed that diplomats were too far removed from the daily life of ordinary people and vital issues at home. Though there is a grain of truth in this, let me note that we "ordinary people" do not always appreciate the responsibility devolving on a diplomat in his sensitive work. The gap between us is largely due to the fact that in recent decades Soviet foreign policy was a realm apart. Whereas domestic issues did come up for discussion, diplomatic matters were walled off from criticism, even, I would say, enveloped in an aura of infallibility, which, I regret to observe, cannot always be guaranteed even by such tangible advantages of Soviet foreign policy as continuity, predictability and humaneness of purpose. Indeed, how can there be any miscalculations and upsets behind the veil of professional secrecy? The meeting of the Foreign Ministry chiefs with representatives of the public shows that they also think it necessary to make diplomacy more open and democratic, to enrich it with ideas from the "outside," as it were.

Do not suppose that I consider the public capable of doing the work of diplomats. I remember one American acquaintance telling me that whereas in the U.S. too many dilettantes were involved in policy making, in the Soviet Union we had experts, which he believed gave us the advantage. I am too all for the professional. On the other hand, a debate in the media over one or other likely political decision could induce the experts to reassess their own proposals and assume greater responsibility for the final decision.

Today is a time of difficult thinking. It concerns Afghanistan and the deployment in Europe of the RSD (IRM)-10s, until lately better known as the SS-20s. We are thinking about the future and arguing about the past. What would have happened if...? That, however, is something I do not like. All ifs are out, as far as the past is concerned. However, the sober lessons that can be drawn are essential for the future. One is that crucial public and state decisions must be taken not in back rooms, but by the public at large, by which I mean the principle, and not the way in which this is done.

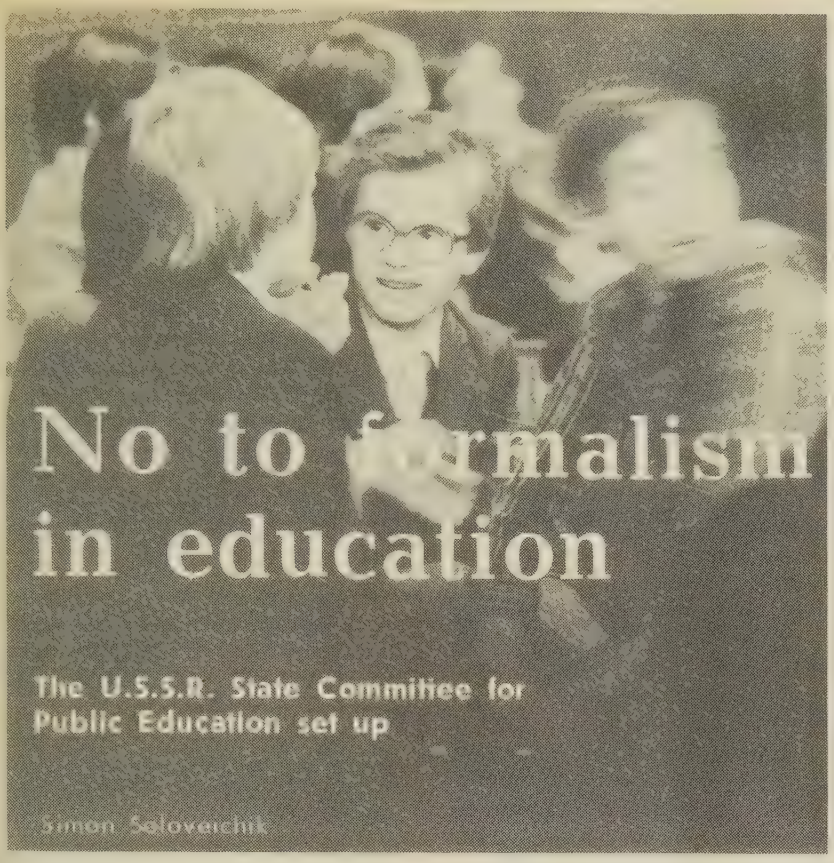
Unveiling diplomatic secrecy is no simple thing, even from the psychological angle. Take the agreement being drawn up for a 50-per-cent reduction in strategic offensive weapons. For years on end, the details and actual process of the U.S.S.R.-U.S.A. arms control talks were taboo to the layman, as this was something the parties had agreed from the outset. Now the Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman has heard a public proposal to send members of the public to Geneva when discussions have reached a critical point, so as to clarify the state of affairs on the spot.

Meanwhile, negotiations under public supervision sounds utopian, but who knows? After all, glasnost is already infiltrating areas that were completely inaccessible. Experts currently are racking their brains over the 150-page memorandum concerned with the points of departure for the armaments that the parties are to reduce, and that is to be appended to the text of the future accord. Formerly, the very idea of this would have been seen as a pipedream. After all, 50 per cent of the same weapons, which have hitherto comprised the basis of Soviet and American security, will remain in the hands of the two sides – unlike the INF treaty, which abolishes an entire class of weapons. This is one of the complex aspects involved in working out the agreement. At the same time it is part of its unique character as one more move towards openness and confidence, without which the further development of international relationships is unthinkable.

The conversations held at the Soviet Foreign Ministry and the interest shown in laymen's views open up avenues for debating crucial international issues. Take, for instance, arms exports and "flash points." The arms sold break away from the seller and often follow their own, extremely unpredictable course. Given that many countries are involved here, surely it is time to place on the agenda the issue of an international convention that would ban arms trafficking generally. At the very least, the relevant talks between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., which the latter broke off, should be resumed.

What also came to mind was the need to lay fewer claims to pride of place with regard to the settlement of regional conflicts. It is the result that is important. And the result can be achieved only through joint effort by proceeding from useful suggestions found in every plan, whether Soviet, American, British, or whatever.

However, back to what induced me to enter the Soviet Foreign Ministry building on Moscow's Smolenskaya Square. Glasnost and diplomacy. I would say diplomats are still too jealous guardians of the information at their disposal. However, of late we have been seeing increasingly often how the common sense of the nations expedites political decision making. It was citizens' diplomacy or, as we now say, popular diplomacy, that ensured the breakthrough in U.S.S.R.-U.S.A. relations and in disarmament. There is no doubt that over the past few years Soviet foreign policy has become more active, energetic, flexible and open, charged with the spirit of the changes that are taking place at home.



No to formalism in education

The U.S.S.R. State Committee for Public Education set up

Simon Soloveichik

On the evening of the 8th of March, radio and television broadcast the news that the Ministry of Public Education, the Ministry of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education and the State Committee for Vocational Training had been abolished and the **U.S.S.R. State Committee for Public Education** had been set up instead. From now on a single body will have responsibility for the education of the young - from kindergarten to post-graduate level.

Almost all the suggestions that have been coming till recently from all parts of the country favoured the merger, and it can therefore be said that the appropriate decree of the Supreme Soviet Presidium reflected public opinion. There is now hope that departmental barriers will be removed and a single system of education created, and that boys and girls entering vocational schools, and secondary school leavers starting college will have a more solid grounding.

Many people in our country and worldwide probably believe that the fewer administrators there are the better. This means that educationists will be more independent in their work and that there will be greater diversity within a single system. One further reason for the merger of the three departments should be noted. There seemed to be no other way to get things moving in the field of education. No decisions or reforms have so far been effective there.

But perhaps the situation in other countries is exactly the same? In his book "A place called school" the American educationist John Goodlad shows that in the United States the schools have not adopted any of the numerous innovations put forward in the past few decades. New actors appear but the play remains unchanged, he notes.

The decision on the merger is therefore especially important. The appointment of a new minister sometimes leads to changing the ministries concerned. The proficiency of the actors is often more important than the play. The new people running public education will have much to do. Yet I am sure that the tremendous responsibility, the spirit of perestroika in the country, and the possibility of starting from scratch will spiritually renew those currently in charge.

Inspiring guidance means sincerity, truthfulness, concern for man

Perestroika in the economy means the replacement of administrative methods with economic ones. In general educational and vocational schools and in colleges economic methods are not applicable. What, then, is to replace administrative methods in education?

Last year Uchitelskaya Gazeta (Teacher's Gazette) put forward the concept of inspiring guidance. The teacher can only take his proper place if systematic work is carried out to keep him enthusiastic, Lenin wrote. Inspiring guidance means sincerity, truthfulness, the ability to rally the work collective for the achievement of a major goal, concern for man, and, most importantly, the backing up of words with actions.

The former leaders of the ministry of Public Education gained notoriety for their constant attempts to prove that everything was well in our schools or, at least, that the situation was not as bad as the ill-intentioned media tried to suggest. In fact, grave mistakes were made in the upbringing of young people. The situation was characterized by the manipulation of grades, formalism, the lack of necessary concepts and new methods of teaching, and by armchair administration.

Each educational establishment must become a school where truth reigns supreme, where teachers and instructors tell the truth at lessons and lectures, and where a truthful, benevolent and good working atmosphere prevails. This is impossible to achieve by administrative methods.

The attitude of the new committee to the well-known innovators in teaching, of whom Mikhail Gorbachev spoke earnestly at the recent plenum of the party's Central Committee, will also be the touchstone of its true merit.

A recent issue of the West German magazine Päd-extra has on its front cover the words Pedagogika sotrudnichestva (Pedagogics of Cooperation), in large Cyrillic type. The issue also carries photographs of innovators and a thorough exposition of their ideas. Similar articles and even books have been published in Bulgaria and China. The innovative ideas of Soviet teachers have caused a sensation in the pedagogical world. New methods of teaching show a real way of overcoming the numerous problems of present-day schools.

The pedagogics of cooperation has supplemented the long-familiar motto "Knowledge is strength" with another: "Strength does not produce knowledge." It is a basic human right to have a leader capable of providing inspiring guidance.

From the editors: When this article had gone to press, it was revealed that Gennady Yagodin, former Minister of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education, had been appointed Chairman of the State Committee for Public Education. We wish him success inhis new post.

Eleven months in orbit

Interview with pilot-cosmonaut YURI ROMANENKO

What does a man feel like after a 326-day flight in outer space?

Why is everybody so concerned about my physical condition? During the last few days in Kislovodsk, where I was on holiday after my space flight I was interviewed by a Stern correspondent. He asked how I felt and what I was doing. He asked me to do a few exercises, such as pressups from the floor.

"On one arm or both?" I inquired.

"Can you do it on one arm?" he asked in surprise.

I performed about fifteen pressups on my left arm. The doctor of our crew, who happened to be present, proposed that we change places. Putting his camera aside, the correspondent did the exercise on both arms, but when the doctor suggested he did the same on one arm, he dropped to the floor. I do not divulge his name, although some Western papers mentioned my name and that of the doctor who, they claimed, thought I did not feel well on Earth. This was a pack of lies, because I love it down here and feel very well indeed.

Would you kindly tell our readers about your last space mission. How did it all start? I thought that after your second flight as captain of the Soviet-Cuban crew in 1980 you had settled down on Earth. You were working at the Space Training Centre and the Flight Control Centre as supervisor of a group of operators in charge of space walk.

Working at the Flight Control Centre was exciting. But as time passed I felt the urge to go on another mission. I even dreamed about outer space. Finally, I went to Vladimir Shatalov, chief of the Space Training Centre, and persuaded him that it was too early to "retire" me. He agreed to put me through another training programme.

Why did you choose to go on a mission of such long duration? As a veteran cosmonaut you could have asked for a less exacting assignment, say a mission, which usually lasts a week.

During the preceding missions I had analyzed my character and decided that a prolonged expedition was what I wanted. I like to work with modern equipment and solve baffling puzzles. It gives me pleasure to work with a big, sophisticated system on my own. At the same time I dislike jobs that have to be done in haste, out of schedule, when your mind is slower than your hands. There was yet another circumstance that determined my choice, one that only a cosmonaut would understand. It is only during a prolonged mission that it is possible to leave the ship and walk in raw space. Many of my colleagues, both Soviet and foreign, said it was worth venturing on such an expedition for the sake of those few minutes. Seeing the stars floating under you, you feel as if you are the master of the Universe and are filled with a surplus of spiritual energy.

You spent nearly a year in space. It would be fair to say that 1987 was a special year for all the people of the Earth and the Soviet people too. It was packed with many important events. What terrestrial developments appeared to you most significant, as you watched them from outer space?

I would like above all to point out that the distance separating you from the Earth does not automatically divorce you from terrestrial problems. Any colleague of mine will tell you that your perception of the Earth from orbit is keener. You cannot see state boundaries from outer space. And you love the African savannah and the peaks of the Himalayas just as much as the Russian forests. What hurts you most when you are in space is the scars of wars. As we flew over the Persian Gulf I often wanted those responsible for the conflict to see the soul-scorching fires.

Therefore I would say outright that the most significant event of 1987 was the Soviet-American summit meeting in Washington. Sasha Alexandrov and I tried to follow the talks "directly," i.e., through communication satellite channels. Unfortunately, this was not always possible as we needed our telemetry for technical purposes.

How did you manage to keep abreast of terrestrial developments? How did you spend your leisure time?

We spent 11 months in space. During that period seven cargo craft docked at the Mir orbital complex. In addition to fuel, food supplies, water and instruments essential for the functioning of the station and life support, every one of them would bring letters from relatives and friends, new films, music recorded on tape, papers and periodicals. In 1987, there was a real revolution in the press. During a previous mission of long duration in 1977-78 Georgi Grechko and I had learnt more by reading the papers between the lines. Today they write about things that were once merely whispered in your ear. As soon as we received fresh papers, we would read everything from cover to cover. Perhaps it was then that we felt we were missing the possibility of actively contributing to the process of renovation taking place in Soviet society. Of course, we realized that by doing our job faithfully in orbit we were doing our bit too.

We had only a few books aboard, Jack London's "Martin Eden," and his short stories (these were meant to raise my spirits during the last few months), a book by Saint-Exupéry, Sergei Yesenin's poetry, Mikhail Zoshchenko's short stories, Ivan Yefremov's "Hour of Taurus," collections of Japanese and Polish detective stories and the last book about Yuri Gagarin in the "Biography" series.

We were specially interested in publications about the so-called blank spots in the history of our country. Of the memoirs published last year, the best were Ilya Ehrenburg's "Years, People Life," which appeared in Ogonyok. Discussions in the papers and periodicals showed that the impact of perestroika was not confined to the best people in our society. However, I feel my first-hand knowledge is inadequate. My impressions may therefore seem naive to those who, unlike myself, were living on the Earth.

One thing that struck us was that, when we went into orbit a year ago, very few

The cosmonauts Yuri Romanenko and Alexander Alexandrov: fit as a fiddle after almost a year in space.

Photo by A. Fyodorov

people in our country knew anything about AIDS. When we returned home we found practically everybody is well informed about this terrible disease. The statistics have changed too. AIDS seems to be spreading rapidly over the planet like the plague.

I find it difficult to imagine such a long period of isolation from the world of familiar surroundings. To tell you the truth, we expected Cosmonaut Yuri Romanenko to be consumed with anguish and to pine for home. Was that the case? Was the process of physical and psychological adaptation to prolonged weightlessness difficult for you?

Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov gave serious thought to sending a man with a gift for writing on a space mission. This was not fortuitous, apparently. A man like that could give an exhaustive and vivid answer to this question. I seem to be an unsentimental person of a rational character. The doctors say I have an immense ability to adapt both to weightlessness and unusual psychological conditions. I get down to work immediately and waste no time lamenting. Perhaps I shall disappoint you, but it is a fact that by the time the mission was over, ordinary earthly sensations had been thoroughly forgotten. Though I tried, I could not recall in detail any particular odours, sounds or landscapes. As we flew over extremely familiar places, I tried to see them in my mind's eye, but could not. Perhaps this was a defence reflect of my mind to prolonged isolation from the Earth.

It is worth noting that I was not too eager to return by the prearranged date. There was very little time left till the end of the calendar year. But the duration of the mission largely depended on the service life of spacecraft units.

Of course, mental fatigue accumulated. I am no superman and don't pretend to be one. Song-writing was a form of relaxation for me. Before the mission I had never written any poetry, nor could I play any musical instrument. In space Alexander Laveikin, the flight engineer, kindly gave me a few lessons in music. They helped me master the guitar. How I learned to write poetry I simply don't know. During the space mission I wrote 26 songs. Some of them were in cluded in radio reports broadcast from the orbital station Mir.

There were a few unpleasant circumstances. Though we did not pay attention to them in the beginning, they proved to be a terrible nuisance in flight. When you do your physical exercises, you sweat. But owing to weightlessness the sweat does not run off your body. As a result, you train in a salt water bath. Practically all day long you have to wear a special Penguin suit which is fitted out with braces to put a load on your skeleton. By the end of the day you have a splitting headache. You can't even have a good sleep. In the living quarters the designers failed to provide sound proofing. The constant noise produced by the instruments and other equipment give you the impression that you are dozing in a factory shop. When we returned I suggested to the designers that they shield off the cabins with sound proofing mats. They took my advice.

Despite this, your physical condition after the 326-day space flight surprised the doctors. It was better than that of crews who had spent far less time in space. Why?

When Sasha Laveikin and I were planning for the expedition we decided to carry out all the doctors' instructions meticulously with respect to exercise. Our colleagues who performed earlier flights did not pay such attention to exercise. Regardless of how I felt, I would spend several hours a day pedalling the ergometric bicycle and running on the race track. Sometimes it was real torture, but I knew that the end was worth the effort. What end? Not just my own condition. Our mission would not remain a record one forever. Plans are being drawn up for flights of longer duration. For instance, during the recent period there has been a lot of talk about a Soviet-American flight to Mars. To undertake long-range flights even within the solar system without adequate knowledge of man's potential would mean taking a grave risk.

The fact that your team mate Alexander Laveikin had to return to Earth on account of his physical condition before the termination of the mission reinforces what you have said. Incidentally, would you please tell our readers what interfered with the docking of the astrophysical module Quant to the Mir complex? We know that you and Laveikin had to walk in space.

Shortly before the Quant arrived we sent one of the Progress cargo craft away. As we were packing the freight a fan behind our backs drew a sack with personal hygiene kit into the docking section. The kit remained outside the hatch and later wedged into the docking unit of the Quant. When Sasha and I stepped out into space and the craft slightly separated, we saw that damned kit. I must say it was a terrible disappointment. However, this enabled us to acquire some experience in emergency space walk. In the past, preparations for the procedure took four days. We also learned how to execute jobs with big craft, each weighing 20 tons. In the more remote future, when we start to assemble orbital settlements and factories, the engineers will be grateful for the painful experience we gained from the situation with the Quant.

During the eleven months you spent in outer space you carried out close on 100 experiments in various fields of science. What are the most significant results of your mission?

The astrophysical module Quant obtained unique results, in my view. It registered a supernova outburst in the Large Magellanic Cloud. The installations we used to conduct biotechnological and technological experiments helped produce interesting results. The Soviet-Syrian space mission proved fruitful in summer 1987. We made the third-generation research station suitable for work and habitation. We added quite a lot of research equipment to it.

You are now undergoing a thorough medical checkup. Then you are going on holiday. What will you do after that?

Work, just work. Work for space on the Earth for the time being.

Interviewed by
SERGEI LESKOV

Assembly shop at the Hanaco factory. Absolute sterility.

Gong Daorong: his concerns are strictly

TAKING THE TIGER BY THE TAIL

From our special correspondent SERGEI GOLYAKOV

Dressed in a light-weight pale green track suit and with a small hat of the same colour on his head, Gong Daorong could have been taken for a character from a 'star wars' film. But he is engaged in very down-to-earth business. He is deputy director-general of the joint Japanese-Chinese factory Tianjin Hanaco Medical Company Ltd situated on the territory of the economic-technological development area (TEDA) not far from Tianjin.

While we were changing our street footwear for plastic shoes at the entrance to this sterile kingdom and donning white overalls, Gong kept apologizing: "I greatly regret having to inconvenience my guests, but we have to ensure ideal cleanliness."

Cleanliness is one of the prerequisites for good health. And it is the needs of the health service that the 325 workers at the factory cater for. The plant produces throwaway medical drips, without which no hospital or ambulance service can function. Through the glass windows in the walls of the brightly lighted hermetically sealed premises, we could see long rows of tables at which girls in white smocks were working. This was the assembly shop. The girls fitted deftly together two transparent polyethylene tubes, a valve and a needle to form the drip. The components came from the neighbouring premises, where they were produced by automatic machines.

At first glance it might seem a simple job, but in reality it requires a special knack, precision and great care. That ensures the high quality of the ready product.

"We signed the contract with the Japanese firm Hanaco in April 1986," Gong told us. "In August of that year we began the construction of the factory premises - taking up an area of 6,200 square metres. In March 1987, the construction work was completed and all the equipment brought in from Japan was installed. The next two months were spent mastering the equipment. On May 31, 1987, the factory was operating at full capacity: 24 million drips a year. Half of them are sold on the domestic market, and the other half are exported."

When we were taking leave of Gong, he remarked: "Should the Soviet Union show interest in our goods, be sure to let us know."

The concrete building with the Hanaco trademark on one of its walls, like Tianjin TEDA where the factory is situated, are signs of the policy of expanding ties with the outside world, an important part of the reforms now under way in China. As Deng Xiaoping put it: "Simultaneously with the policy of revitalizing the economy inside the country we are pursuing a policy of expanding economic ties with foreign countries." What is the essence of this policy? What are its main aims and priorities?

Keeping the doors open

The fundamental principle on which the policy is based is that China, like any other country, cannot develop in isolation, without wide international exchanges with other peoples, and the rapid assimilation of technical achievements and information. Past experience has shown clearly that success cannot be achieved by keeping to a closed door policy. Although predominantly relying on its own forces, China at the same time believes it necessary to extend ties with other countries, attract foreign capital, technology and the experience of foreign experts in order to advance its own development. This is not a short-term policy, but a policy designed for long-term effect. Any changes in it will only be changes towards widening its external ties and contacts. The greater openness of socialist society to international exchanges is an indispensable feature of its renovation and progress.

It is believed in Peking that helping China in its development is a two-way street, as its foreign partners and world economic progress as a whole also profit. If the industrial powers don't help the developing countries, the Chinese leaders argue, they will have difficulty in resolving the problem of markets and economic development. It is not only the developing countries, but the developed

Continued. See our issues Nos. 3, 4, 8.

down-to-earth.

Output of the Beijing jeep corporation.

countries as well that have to expand foreign economic ties. Three quarters of the world's population lives in the developing countries. Such a potential cannot be ignored. There is a limit to an expansion of the world market in the developed countries alone.

But the Chinese have not shut their eyes to another aspect, the certain risk that is inherent in a policy of openness. If a window is flung wide open, not only fresh air but also a certain amount of dirt is let in. But as the Chinese leaders have underlined, socialist policy and the state machine can cope with alien influence.

Both theory and an analysis of the realities clearly reveal that differences in social systems are no justification for isolationism. The policy of reviving the national economy and expanding external ties is pursued without abandoning the socialist course. The greater part of the Chinese national economy is based on public and collective ownership. Yet, at the same time, individual enterprises are allowed a certain latitude, as are foreign loans and foreign technology, and the construction in China of enterprises built by foreign businessmen. They augment the socialist economy, but cannot erode its basic position.

Experiment in the south

At the beginning of February the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Zhao Ziyang sent a TV message to the participants in the World Economic Forum in Davos (Switzerland). He noted that for China, with its undeveloped domestic market participation in international exchanges presents a serious problem. That is why, he explained, we are taking the following measures: first, through our economic reform we are improving investment conditions and making them economically more profitable. We have been doing this over the past nine years and have achieved our first successes. Secondly, we have drawn up a system for the gradual expansion of ties in special economic zones, open coastal cities, open coastal areas of economic technological development, and the country's hinterland.

That could be described as the skeleton of the new system. Many people to whom I spoke helped me fill in the picture. The first was Lu Yongkuan, division chief at the ministry of foreign economic relations and trade. He was a young-looking man with an unwrinkled face, sparkling brown eyes and an entirely incongruous shock of grey hair. Trials and tribulations can not have passed him by. Today, too, he has plenty of problems. His job at the ministry is to attract foreign investments, and, as he was the first to admit, so far China lacks both the experience and the know-how.

Between 1979 and 1986 China used a total of about 30,000 million dollars obtained from abroad. just over 70 per cent of this sum came in the form of foreign credits and loans. A part of the funds was used to cover the foreign trade deficit. (In 1986 Chinese imports exceeded exports by 12,000 million dollars.) The rest was used to build up the newest industries, such as computer technology and the production of colour TV sets. Finally, foreign capital is being used for the technical reconstruction of the aircraft and automobile industries, for the rapid development of the chemical, iron and steel industries, transport and the power industry. In 1986 China had a foreign debt of 20,600 million dollars. In order to cover that debt and build up currency reserves, China needed to increase its exports and develop the production of commodities that could stand the competition on the world market. But the world market, as Lu remarked, differs radically from the domestic market. There are no shortages there, and outsiders receive anything but a warm welcome. In order to get a foothold in the world market and then expand it, one has to learn a great deal.

The policy of attracting foreign partners to China and setting up joint enterprises is part of this course of learning to cope. A start was made by opening four special economic zones in the south of the country, Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Shantou in Guangdong Province and Xiamen - in the Fujian Province. What prompted their choice? Both provinces lie in the direct vicinity of Hong Kong and Macao. The rich huaqiao living there, as had been expected, were at the initial stage the most active investors of capital.

In just a few years peasant fields had been replaced by modern cities with a developed infrastructure, their own power base, big housing estates, administrative centres and extensive industrial zones. These enclaves of advanced technology and management were called upon to set an example of rational economic progress and pave the way for the rebuilding of the entire Chinese economy on a modern basis.

When in February 1984, Deng Xiaoping returned from a tour of the southern provinces he summed up his impressions to the CC CPC: "Houses in Shenzhen seem to grow right under your eyes - it takes only a couple of days for another storey to go up, and then a few days more and the whole house is completed. The construction teams come from the interior of the country, but their high productivity is the result of excellent organization and a proper system of incentives and penalties."

Deng Xiaoping described the special economic zones as the windows through which technological achievements, management practice, and know-how are

entering the country and the policy of external ties is being implemented. "Through these areas we can assimilate foreign technological achievements, obtain know-how and learn the art of management, for management too is founded on knowledge," the Chinese leader summed up.

"From the end of 1979 and up to November 1987," Lu Yongkuan told me "8,900 joint enterprises with a total capital of more than 20,000 million dollars were set up in China. This includes joint enterprises with Chinese and foreign capital, contract enterprises (cooperatives), and enterprises based solely on foreign capital. In addition, a number of contracts have been signed with foreign companies for joint prospecting for oil on China's continental shelf. About 7,600 million dollars have already been invested. The main investors come from Hong Kong and Macao - they account for about 70 per cent of all investments. The rest come from the United States, Japan and the Common Market countries."

Direct investments of foreign capital are concentrated chiefly but not exclusively in the special economic zones. Following the tour of inspection of the southern provinces made by Deng Xiaoping in April 1984 the CC CPC and the State Council of the Republic decided to open up 14 coastal cities to foreign investment. Together with the special economic zones they form a sort of advance strip along the Chinese coast open to the outside world. As Zhao Ziyang was to say later, that strip incorporates China's oldest industrial area, fertile farm lands, and has a fairly high cultural and technical level, as well as large numbers of skilled workers. We hope, he added, that in the near future people will realize that China, especially its open coastal areas are a tempting place for the investment of capital and the export of technology.

This is gradually being realized by the outside world.

Two megalopolises

Among the 14 coastal towns open to the outside world, Tianjin and Shanghai hold a special place. Tianjin is the biggest port in Northern China and a major industrial and scientific centre. Shanghai is China's biggest city, its main industrial centre and biggest sea port. It has more than 10,000 industrial enterprises producing about a tenth of the country's gross national product.

Both cities have a long record of trade links with foreign firms and cooperation with foreign businessmen.

"In the fifties we had particularly close contacts with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries," recalled the Deputy Secretary-General of Tianjin Municipal People's Government, and Director of Tianjin Commission of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Zhang Zhaozuo. "However in the sixties these ties came to an end. And during the years of the 'cultural revolution' China cut itself off from the outside world altogether. It was only after 1979 that we began to make up for lost time."

Since then Tianjin has concluded more than 600 million dollars worth of contracts with foreign firms for the purchase of modern equipment and technology. This has allowed the city to modernise much of its industry and expand the volume and range of its export goods. The 207 contracts for setting up joint enterprises are worth another 517 million dollars. 238 million dollars falls to the share of foreign capital (Hong Kong, the U.S.A., Japan, Singapore, Canada and other countries). The rest of the money was Chinese.

Work is in full swing in Tianjin TEDA.

Which of the joint ventures are doing best? When you ask that question, the answer you are most likely to hear is the Franco-Chinese wine company which, using French technology and Chinese-grown grapes, produces a wine of the Dynasty type that is already in demand on the world market. Another example cited is Wella cosmetics made by the joint Chinese-West German firm Liming Cosmetics Co. It too is earning China foreign currency.

A number of major joint undertakings have been started in Shanghai. They include the Shanghai United Wooltex Corporation Ltd, a joint Chinese and Hong Kong firm founded in 1981, the Shanghai Volskwagen Automotive Ltd, which assembles Volkswagen Santanas (30,000 cars and 100,000 engines annually), Sino-American Shanghai Squibb Pharmaceutical Ltd and a number of others.

In the electrical engineering industry, the first joint company in China was the Shanghai factory producing lifts and escalators. It was set up on the basis of the former Swiss Schindler and its Hong Kong subsidiary, and began operation in July 1980. Wan Deming, who started at the factory as a worker and is now its deputy general director, said that with the help of foreign experts, productivity of labour had increased perceptibly and the quality of output greatly improved. Now up to 30 per cent of the factory's output is exported, which brings in about 5.5 million dollars in foreign currency. The factory's overall profits are 15 million yuan (100 yuan equal 16.05 rubles). 33 per cent, that is, about one third, goes to the state in the form of taxes. The rest of the profits, including the foreign currency, the company uses for its own needs. Part of the foreign currency is used to buy components, but the proportion used for this purpose is gradually dropping. At present only 20 per cent of components come from abroad, the other 80 per cent are now made in China itself. Foreign specialists receive their salaries in hard currency, including the general director, who comes from Federal Germany. "He's been on the job for three years already," Wang told us, "and even married a Chinese girl."

Neither Tianjin nor Shanghai have to ask the central authorities for permission to set up joint enterprises with capital of up to 30 million dollars. They have complete independence. And another important element of their open status is the right they enjoy to form so-called economic technological development areas (TEDA) along the lines of the special economic zones.

The TEDAs

If you drive away from the centre of the city by car along a highway as straight as an arrow, in about forty minutes you will reach a smallish two-storey building. It is the headquarters of the Tianjin TEDA. The decision to form the area was taken on

December 6, 1984 - just over three years ago...

"That's not such a long time ago," remarked a member of the administrative staff, Zhao Zhiying, "but quite a bit has already been done."

The area covers 33 square kilometres right next to the port. It used to be wasteland and part of it was even used as a dump. It is expected that its development will take 30 years. But about 3 square kilometres will be ready by 1990. It is proposed to put up 100-150 joint enterprises on the site, homes for 30,000 people, as well as shopping facilities, hotels, restaurants, entertainment and leisure facilities. Production premises will run into about 200 thousand square metres, of which more than half, 110 thousand, have already been completed. This includes a telephone station, a transformer power unit, a secondary school and sports facilities.

In a separate pavilion there is an exhibit of the more than thirty of goods already being produced at the new factories. On the stand are the drips mentioned at the beginning of this article with the trademark Hanaco, video cassettes, electronic chips, bicycles, toys, and decorating materials.

By the end of last year the TEDA administration had signed contracts for setting up 84 joint enterprises. Most of them fully financed by foreign capital. And their output is designed mainly for export. Hence the exceptionally profitable terms of the contracts. State taxes have been reduced to 15 per cent, and local taxes, which usually amount to 3 per cent, will not be levied until 1990. Moreover, import and export tariffs have been lifted, as has the 10 per cent levy on profits taken out of the country. Formalities for entering and leaving the country have been greatly simplified for foreigners.

The TEDA administration is subordinated to the city authorities. It draws up plans for the development of the area, is responsible for their implementation, considers and approves contracts, has its own legal service, mediates in the choice of labour and has certain other duties. There is also another administrative body to take care of financial aspects, capital construction, the provision of the infrastructure, foreign trade operations and real estate. This body is known as the Tianjin TEDA, which is in effect made up of nine separate companies with responsibility also for material supplies, marketing, catering for the day-to-day needs of the foreigners, the architectural design of all buildings and so on.

Under existing plans, the value of the output of the TEDA by the year 2015 should amount to between 15 and 20 thousand million yuan, or about as much as all of Tianjin produces today.

Good progress is also being made by the Shanghai TEDA. A site of 2.13 square kilometres was found for it in August 1986, and since then 22 foreign and mixed enterprises have set up businesses there with a total capital of 150 million dollars. Of this total, 40 million came from the United States, Hong Kong, Singapore, Federal Germany and Australia. Vice-mayor of Shanghai, Liu Zhenyuan, who quoted these figures to me, mentioned among the foreign investors such well-known companies as Xerox, Coca Cola and a number of others. Xerox, for instance, has acquired four factory buildings and leased more than 24,000 square metres of land.

Shanghai has spent 84 million yuan on developing the TEDA - building up the infrastructure, production premises and landscaping and providing amenities on the surrounding territory. In a Shanghai newspaper I saw an ad for flats in the housing estate for foreigners. The flats are big - 6-8 rooms to be exact, with a café and restaurant on the premises of the block, a swimming pool in the garden and a solarium on the roof.

"We want to provide foreigners with the maximum amenities to make them feel at home," Shanghai friends told me. "There should be nothing to hinder them from working productively."

Freedom of manoeuvre

China believes that the process of attracting foreign investors is on the whole going well. Each year up to 1,000 contracts on average are concluded with foreign companies to a value of about 2,600 million dollars. It's true, however, that not everything is going the way the people who set this programme in motion would have liked.

The main investments so far are being made in the light and textile industries, the construction of hotels, administrative buildings and entertainment centres as this promises the quickest and biggest return on capital.

China attracts foreign businessmen by the vastness of its market, the cheapness of its labour, and the richness of its natural resources. On the other hand, the socialist planned economy is so far adapting with great difficulty to a market economy and the laws of world trade.

How can this dilemma be resolved? Experience shows tthat the main thing is to ensure that your partners have freedom of manoeuvre, that this freedom is not shackled by all sorts of bureaucratic red tape, and to interest them by offering preferential terms. No less important is giving greater economic independence to state enterprises and organizations. They should have the right to enter into direct contractual relations with foreign companies and firms, and not have their hands tied when it comes to resolving practical problems.

What still remains something of a stumbling block is the slowness with which officials take decisions and the shortage of specialists.

There are a number of legal acts governing relations between the state and foreign partners. The most important of them are The law on joint enterprises based on Chinese and Foreign Capital (1979), the law on enterprises based solely on foreign capital (1986), and the decision on stimulating foreign investment passed in October 1986. If one compares them, one notices that each offers increasingly better terms for foreign partners than its predecessor. Step by step state has limited bureaucratic interference in different spheres of activity of joint enterprises and introduced new incentives. For instance, if in the past the top post in a company was held by a Chinese representative, now, more often than not, it is a foreigner who occupies the director's office. Staffing policy has also undergone changes. Enterprises have greater freedom and leeway in hiring and appointing personnel. In the past the government insisted that the wages of Chinese staff at mixed enterprises should be no less than 120 per cent and no higher than 150 per cent of wages at similar Chinese factories. Now the upper limit has been raised. Experience showed that productivity of labour at joint enterprises was higher than at state ones, hence the higher earnings.

The decisions taken by China's State Council also clearly define how quickly decisions must be taken on setting up mixed enterprises. The period between the receipt of an application and the granting of permission should not exceed three months.

Hong Kong, Macao, the U.S.A., Japan, Federal Germany, Canada, Australia... But what about the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries? What is their part in Chinese plans to expand cooperation with the outside world?

Most people I talked to are convinced that the present level of cooperation with them can by no means be regarded as satisfactory. "We badly need steel, timber, plastics, machine tools and other equipment," I was told in Tianjin by Zhang Zhaoruo. "In turn we could offer you good footwear, textiles, food products, colour TV sets. Cooperation between us should be expanded. In general we are all for Tianjin becoming the capital of foreign trade with the socialist countries."

So what stands in the way? Apart from everything else, lack of flexibility on the part of foreign trade organizations, bureaucratic attitudes, the absence of information. In other words, what is needed is direct ties between producers, and not just government departments. Things will go much better if business ties begin to be established not only by government departments but directly by cities themselves, and by enterprises. That is how China sees it.

Photos by author

Cooperative societies: a factor of economic restructuring

LEV NIKIFOROV, Cand. Sc. (Econ.)

A bill on "Cooperative movement in the U.S.S.R." has been brought before the nation for discussion.

The times are still fresh in our memories when no material or social base seemed to have survived in the country for the restoration of the old forms of cooperatives or the introduction of new ones. We are now ceratin that the idea of socialism as a system of civilized cooperators is not something that belongs to the history of the evolution of Sôcialist ideas, but the backbone of Socialist renewal.

The process of expanding the cooperative movement, which has now been going on for some time, shows that cooperatives can and must be a powerful motive force in accelerating the social and economic development of the nation. This, in turn, dictates the need to do away with attitudes to cooperative movement whereby it is seen as a form of economic management whose sphere of activity is constantly shrinking and whose principles lose their importance as state principles gain ground. The bill on "Cooperative movement in the U.S.S.R." defines the steadily developing form of that publicly beneficial type of enterprise and is aimed, among other things, at offsetting anti-cooperative feeling.

Over a single year of evolving new forms of cooperatives in the Soviet Union, it has become clear that there is every precondition for turning the broad cooperative movement operating around the country in various social and economic spheres into a movement in which, in Lenin's words, "really large masses of the population actually take part."

Far from declining, the need to impart a new quality to the development of the cooperative movement has gained an additional dimension. New possibilities have emerged for developing cooperative societies in various spheres of the economy, including those opened up by the progress of science and technlogy. The importance of various forms of cooperative movement in meeting the needs of the population has grown. The idea is to apply cooperative principles to the state-run sectors of the economy given the setting up of a new economic managerial structure.

Cooperatives will continue to play an important part in increasing the output of food and other consumer goods, along with other products, improving the services available to the population, expanding the socialist market and filling it with goods and services, maintaining a balance between supply and demand, and stimulating the circulation of money. The structure of employment will certainly be improved, as will the comprehensive utilization of manpower, material and financial resources, and better use made of social and economic incentives and competition to boost socialist enterprise.

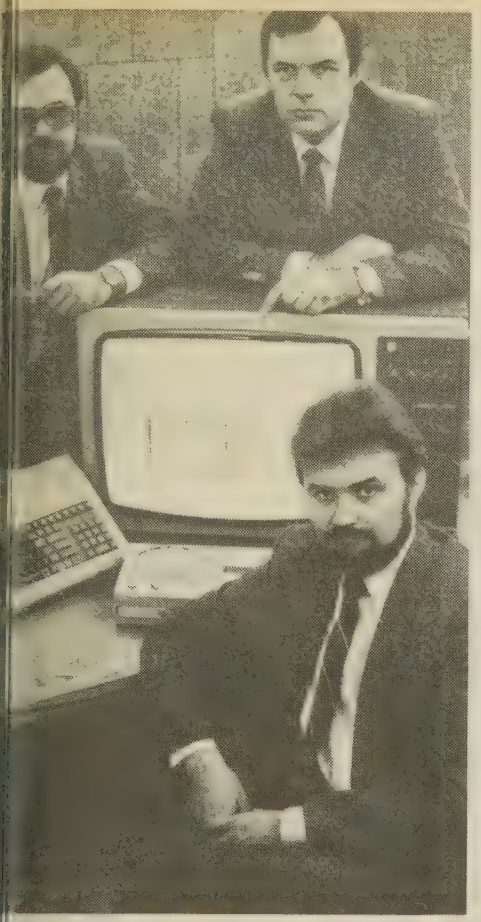
These are the main tasks of cooperative movement as part of the system of socialist social realtions and as defined in the bill on cooperative movement.

One of the provisions of the bill emphasizes that working for a cooperative is a prestigious and respectable occupation which is encouraged by the state in every way. That provision of the bill, along with the other principles written into it, are an effective guarantee that cooperative societies will play an appropriate part in socialist society, especially at its present revolutionary stage of developoment. The other principles in the bill cover voluntary entry into and withdrawal from a cooperative, material and social incentives, self-management and full self-support relying on cooperative's resources, cost-accounting and self-financing, and the right to choose a form of cooperation depending on concrete conditions and tasks.

Cooperative societies vary in forms and functions from sphere to sphere, which is an important factor of the cooperative movement's progress. Until now that variety has been impossible, and this was the main reason why cooperatives could not be developed in various sectors of the economy, and farming and consumer cooperatives, which have existed for a long time, were not very efficient. Under the bill, conditions are to be created to promote various forms of cooperatives and stimulate their growth around the country. Regrettably, the bill does not provide for the development of cooperative movement not only at state enterprises, but also in public organizations, an opportunity that should not be missed.

There is an obvious need to adopt a differentiated approach to defining the conditions under which various cooperatives operate. This is taken care of to a certain extent in the bill, although cooperatives are divided into only two categories - production and consumer cooperatives. This, of course, reduces the possibilities for regulating their operation and growth. Only a differentiated approach to the specifics of cooperatives according to form of property, function, the sources of reproduction, sphere of activity and size is capable of creating the appropriate conditions for developing a variety of forms of cooperative societies.

Cooperatives can be divided according to their size: from major and medium enterprises or a group of enterprises (such as collective farms, consumer cooperatives, some new forms of cooperatives meeting consumers' demands and improving the services, etc.) to temporary teams formed on an ad hoc basis.



This personal computer is a joint effort by the members of an inventors' cooperative shown here. Left to right: S. Bolshakov, Y. Sukhodolsky and Y. Savva.

Small cooperatives may merge into more amalgamated ones. New types of cooperative have evolved into major enterprises, and their evolution can be easily examined. Cooperatives could have grown faster and improved their organization more rapidly had it not been for the problems encountered in supplying them with material and technical resources.

The most important common feature shared by all cooperatives, however diverse their forms may be, is the principle written into the bill whereby a cooperative is defined as a voluntary association of individuals based on equal membership for the purpose of joint activity in the sphere of production or any other and with a view to deriving profit, meeting certain requirements and exploiting creative and labour potential.

Cooperatives are to implement the basic principles of cooperative movement and assure the position of every member of a cooperative as its owner in his or her own right. The social and economic essence of membership of a cooperative is in attaining that measure of equality. One way to combine individual and collective interests is to pull the resources of its members and set up divisible and indivisible funds. Forming cooperatives by pooling member shares is one of the general principles of the cooperative movement. At the moment member shares paid into housing, garden and collective recreation cooperatives form their basic capital. The forms of production cooperatives that have existed until now do not use shares or funds, as in the case of collective farms, while in consumer cooperatives they play a token part. This can be explained by the historical specifics of the evolution of collective farms and consumer cooperatives which have lost much of the essential principles of cooperatives due to state interference in their activity.

The new forms of cooperative associations arising from self-employment have imparted a serious practical dimension to the issue of member shares. As a voluntary association, the cooperative can and must look for initial capital to sustain its growth.

The entire arrangement of drawing funds from membership, let alone the public at large - member shares, loans and loan interest - is a contradictory phenomenon. Weighing the pros and cons, it becomes clear that the negative aspects of these relations can be weakened considerably or done away with completely if the principles whereby contributed shares are pooled are regulated in a reasonable way and the same approach is adopted to dealing with loans and the growth of accumulated member shares.

If a member decides to withdraw from a cooperative he is entitled to a refund of his original contributed share. There is no way of doing without shares, as they combine individual and collective interests in an optimal way. That is something that must be taken into account in discussing the bill before it assumes the force of law.

The development and expansion of cooperative movement leads to a greater variety of relations between cooperatives and creates appropriate conditions for forming cooperative associations. At the moment there are two cooperative associations: the Central Union of Cooperative Societies and the All-Union Association of Collective Fisheries. Their activity has been influenced by the fact that cooperative property has been largely taken over by the state and the Central Union of Cooperative Societies is thus little different from the state managerial structure, although the former has retained some of the principles of self-support. The All-Union Association of Collective Fisheries has also been affected by state interference.

The experience of these two unions shows that broad cooperative associations can be efficient if based on the independence of the parts that make them up, that is, if they rely on the principle of voluntary entry and withdrawal, mutual benefit, and so on. A cooperative association can be efficient only if it is an association of equals rather than a mechanism for handing down orders. That principle is also written into the bill.

It is of vital importance for the expansion and renewal of cooperatives that relations within state property be restructured and the conditions under which state enterprises operate be revised. The transition to a new managerial system in the state sector creates the appropriate conditions for using similar managerial principles throughout the economy, and places state and cooperative enterprises in comparable situations.

The two sectors will be able to compete with each other and the competition between them will be a sound foundation for accelerating social and economic progress, selecting optimal managerial forms and methods, and bringing the forms of socialist property together on that basis.

The indications are that for as long as outmoded conditions and principles of management persist, there will be fears about the ability of the state sector to compete. There is a good chance that restrictions will be imposed on the development of new forms of cooperative societies on various pretexts. Cooperators will therefore experience doubts as to their own futures, but this will be no more than a passing phase.

The development of ties between state and cooperative enterprises and their integration within a single economic framework will mean a genuine rapprochement of the two forms of socialist property, especially if state enterprises assume some of the cooperatives' principles. It is very important to realize that this rapprochement will not lead to the disappearance of cooperative forms in the economy. It provides the groundwork for the emergence of joint, transitional and joint cooperative and state forms in various areas of the economy. One must also bear in mind the possibility that some cooperative structures will go on to become state-run, and vice versa.

The bill on cooperative movement provides solutions to many problems in the economic development of the country and helps remove imbalances and factors that slow it down. I am convinced that the cooperative movement as a form of economic activity will help release tremendous potential of socialism. ■

A HIJACKING ATTEMPT FAILS

Air piracy from the angle of international law

The first case of hijacking a civilian plane was recorded in 1931. Since then terrorists have hijacked upwards of 800 aircraft. Since 1970 there have been some 25,000 acts of terrorism, among them some tragic cases in the U.S.S.R. As recently as on March 8, an Aeroflot TU-154 was hijacked in an attempt to get it to land abroad. What could the hijackers have expected abroad if they had been successful?

VITALY BORDUNOV, a senior research associate at the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences Institute of State and Law, answers the question for New Times.

The TU-154 hijack would inevitably have culminated in the criminal conviction of the terrorists, even if they had managed to get the plane to land in London. Both the national laws of most countries and international norms qualify the armed seizure of aircraft as a punishable crime.

Soviet law envisages various penalties. Hijackers, who killed or gravely injured people or blew up a plane would expect prison terms of 8-15 years, if not the death. Britain, where the hijackers wanted to land, specify life imprisonment. In the U.S. hijacking a plane with aggravating circumstnaces carries either the death sentence or life imprisonment, or a 20-year term in prison.

Hence the TU-154 hijackers could not have counted on a triumphant reception. They are criminals and are thus qualified by the 1970 Hague Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, and the 1971 Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation. Anyone seizing an aircraft in flight by force or exercising control of that aircraft commits a crime. In its Article 1, the Montreal Convention regards any person, who on board an aircraft in flight commits acts of violence against its passengers or destroys or damages an aircraft, as guilty of committing an offence.

The states party to these international conventions are unanimous in stressing that hijackers of civilian aircraft must be severely punished. They have also agreed that should the country to which the hijackers and the hijacked plane go decline to extradite them to the state where the aircraft is registered, the hijackers should be penalized on the spot in full conformity with local law. Hence had the hijackers reached Great Britain, they would inevitably have been sentenced to long terms in prison.

Though the TU-154 hijackers may have thought differently, the extradite-or-punish principle laid down in the international conventions is adequately effective. A case in point is that of the hijacking on December 19, 1985, of an Aeroflot AN-24 plane on a domestic flight, which

Task squad

The abortive Soviet aircraft hijacking has attracted attention to men who are not often in the news, though at times many lives depend upon their professionalism. Soviet newspapers have furnished sufficient details about the Leningrad task force that rescued the passengers of the hijacked aircraft. But how do such groups operate generally? Militia Lieutenant Colonel EVGENY POLETAYEV, the commanding officer of the task force of the Moscow Head Office of Internal Affairs, has given the following interview.

When was this task force created and how was it recruited?

The group was created about ten years ago as a special task force to cope with the more complex aspects of the drive against crime. It is made up of physically and psychologically well trained militia officers who have won distinction. Each holds at least a candidate master of sport rating in boxing, judo, hand-to-hand fighting, and marksmanship. One basic principle for recruitment is that it be entirely voluntary. Prospective members also have to take various tests, amounting to some 400-odd questions. Ages range from 21 to 28.

To brave gunfire, one certainly has to have more than good physique or marksmanship...

Of course. Though the special exercises devised to ensure psychological stability in extreme circumstances help, the most important thing is for these men to be completely dedicated. Let me note once again that the principle of voluntary recruitment is significant. After all, one must do everything in one's power to ensure that nobody suffers and that one keeps going oneself. But as the hijack attempt outside Leningrad demonstrated, this is not always possible. We are forced to compete against odds with hijackers shielding themselves behind innocent people.

So what must your men be able to do?

They must be able to jump from a second-storey height, climb a taut cable, cope with criminals armed with knives, clubs, spades, axes or firearms, and of course, be good marksmen.

was forced to land in China. Though its 42 passengers, the crew and the plane itself were returned to the U.S.S.R., the hijacker was not extradited. However, on March 4, 1986, the Harbin municipal court sentenced him to eight years of imprisonment.

Some pessimistically predict that the international community will fail to cope with terrorism in the air. Though we really cannot expect an early culmination, certain improvements may be noted over 1985-87. At its recent, 123rd, session, the ICAO Council has recorded an approximately 75-per cent drop in aerial violence. The sixth amendment to Appendix 17 of the 1944 Chicago Convention, which provides for a more vigorous preflight searching of passengers and their hand luggage, as well as other security measures within the airport zone (upon whose adoption the U.S.S.R. particularly insisted) has proved very successful.

Soviet efforts to combat violence and terror in the sphere of international civil aviation and its contribution thereto have earned it well deserved prestige with ICAO.

The preflight inspection amendment which was adopted with energetic Soviet support, has played a significant role in averting aerial terrorism, the ICAO Council noted at its session. All the more painful, therefore, is the fact that on March 8 the Ovechkin hijackers managed to sneak arms and an explosive device aboard the TU-154.

Let us now evaluate the TU-154 crew's actions from the angle of the international norms and ICAO recommendations. They did the right thing, as to all practical intents they were confronted with the same situation as had overtaken the Air Afrique DC-10 on July 24, 1987. On that day, when on a regular Brazzaville-Paris flight, following its stopover in Rome, the plane with its 16-member crew and 148 passengers was hijacked by an armed bandit who demanded that the plane take off for Beirut. Persuaded to let the plane land in Geneva for refuelling, the bandit put forward new demands and, when they were not immediately complied with, killed a French passenger.

Let us imagine that the TU-154 crew had obeyed the hijackers and taken off for London after refuelling. There is no guarantee that during or after refuelling the hijackers would not have killed someone to show that they were serious. One final comment: when an aircraft is hijacked within the territory of the state in which it is registered, that state itself decides what to do, as international conventions furnish no specifications in such a case.

Pictures like this one are often seen in the press, as despite the efforts of the world community, aerial terrorism continues. Reproduced from Der Spiegel (F.R.G.)

Is this done in darkness by listening to sounds, like the characters in Vladimir Bogomolov's novel "Moment of Truth"?

It does not necessarily have to be done in complete darkness, as if need be we can direct searchlight beams on the target. Beginners must at least be able to pump ten bullets into a 25-centimetre disc from 25 metres. Let me note, though, that we use firearms only in exceptional circumstances. In the overwhelming majority of cases our men are so well trained that they can dispense with them. They might not look as effective as in the movies, but they are effective in action. At any rate, we have not lost a single man yet.

Are your men always on the alert?

Yes, round the clock. We are mobile enough and can quickly reach any spot in Moscow or outside Moscow even during rush hours.

Do your men wear any special body protection?

Yes, bullet-proof vests. But, let me note once again, what is most important is their fortitude, their stamina. If that is lacking, even a person wearing a bullet-proof vest might shy away from a criminal.

A task force officer relates:

"We knew the criminal was armed, for which reason the first to entrer the room was one of us wearing a bullet-proof vest. A shot was fired, which knocked our comrade down. However, the others behind him broke in and disarmed the bandit. He proved to be an ex-champion marksman. He had also skilfully barricaded himself in by means of the available furniture and had himself perched on top of a wardrobe with a supply of ammunition, thus ensuring himself a good field of vision. In short, he had hoped to hold out for a long time. He fired a 35-gramme slug which struck our man at the edge of his bullet-proof vest. Though he escaped with no more than a bad bruise, he told us later that when it hit him, he had thought a red-hot nail was being driven into his body."

Do you draw on global anti-terrorist experience?

Though I have had no personal contacts, we do study the available information in police magazines of Great Britain, the F.R.G., France and the U.S. on similar task forces.

Do you take into account the criminal's psychology? What sort of a person is a criminal? Cowardly or courageous?

There are, of course, definite psychological generalities in the behavior of criminals and we study these things. But it is rarely the case that when we arrive on the scene we can determine even the weight, height and physique, let alone the psychological traits of the criminal. We only get to know all that after he has been apprehended.

Reporting the attempt to hijack the plane en route for Leningrad, newspapers questioned the qualifications of the Leningrad task force. What is your opinion?

I am in no position to furnish a professional view, as I am not aware of the details. I only know that the group was faced with extreme circumstances and that time was running out. The hijackers refused to emerge and the Leningrad militiamen had to mount an assault, while at the same time endeavouring to protect the passengers. It is difficult to find a proper solution to a task with many unknowns even when the situation is calm. So I think that in this extremely trying situation, the task force did everything humanly possible.

Has your group ever operated on an airplane?

We can act wherever needed, be it in a cellar, in the attic of a high-rise building or on various means of transport, in short, anywhere a crime involving the use of weapons may occur. I might note that we are not called out that often, as the situation in Moscow is quite normal. But, of course, we are constantly on the alert.

Interviewed
by BORIS BALKAREY

A winning ticket for Precious Wilson

It sometimes happens that a song captivates everyone. People hum it, dance to it. You hear it everywhere. The group Eruption had two songs of this kind to its credit: "I Can't Stand the Rain" and "One-Way Ticket." They travelled all over the world. But the group had no further hits. Almost a decade has passed. And now former lead singer of the group, Precious Wilson, performs the song "Juvenile," which is an international hit.

Precious Wilson has arrived to give guest performances in the Soviet Union.

I have been singing since I was a small child,she said. I was born in Jamaica. Music, a sense of rhythm, and dancing come naturally to my people. My mother sang. My three brothers sing and dance as well as Michael Jackson. Certainly not many people choose music and dancing as a profession. There is no security in the world of music. But I have made this choice. True, it was quite by chance, and I was surprised myself.

My family went to live in Britain when I was seven, she continued. I went to an English school. The idea of becoming a professional singer never entered my head. I was interested in art and design, and went to a drama club. One evening, after school, a friend of mine suggested that we go to hear a group rehearsing. We listened to the singing, and were introduced to the performers, and then I tried singing along with them. They liked my singing. Then we had several rehearsals together and started performing. The group was named Eruption.

But singing still remained no more than a pastime for me. Things changed when we took part in a rock contest called Soul Search. We were singled out from among 400 groups, won first prize and landed our first contract. That was the start of the professional group called Eruption and the beginning of my career as a singer.

I am on guest tour now and I spend all my spare time rehearsing for the concerts I give in the evenings. I will give roughly 60 concerts during this tour. You can imagine the physical strain it puts on me. The routines should be planned in such a way as to allow me time to rest, work, meet the press, and see the country. I want to do so very much. I've brought a cinecamera to shoot a film about your country to show my friends when I get back home. My friends told me enviously when I was leaving: "You're lucky. Not many people have an opportunity to visit Russia."

Why did I begin to sing solo? Many of those who start their career with groups graduate to this. It is a natural process. One's talent expands, one's voice improves, and the range of the voice increases. One simply outgrows the limits of a group. A singer who performs on her own has a wider choice of themes, musical trends and styles, and can experiment as much as she wants. In short, you spread your wings. This is why I parted with Eruption. We decided it would be best for them and for myself. But I continue to see a lot of them, and they are still my best friends.

As one becomes more immersed in music, one experiences the influence of a greater number of trends. I don't think that my performing style can be classed with anyone of the existing trends. Reggae is the music of my native country. I like the style very much. I started with this kind of music and I constantly include elements of reggae in my songs. Rock reigns supreme in pop music in Britain, and I am tremendously influenced by it. Then there are childhood memories. My parents liked best of all listening to jazz records of the fifties and sixties. Such is the scope of the music on which I draw. It is quite broad, isn't it? Maybe I shall experience some new musical influences as a result of my tour of your country.

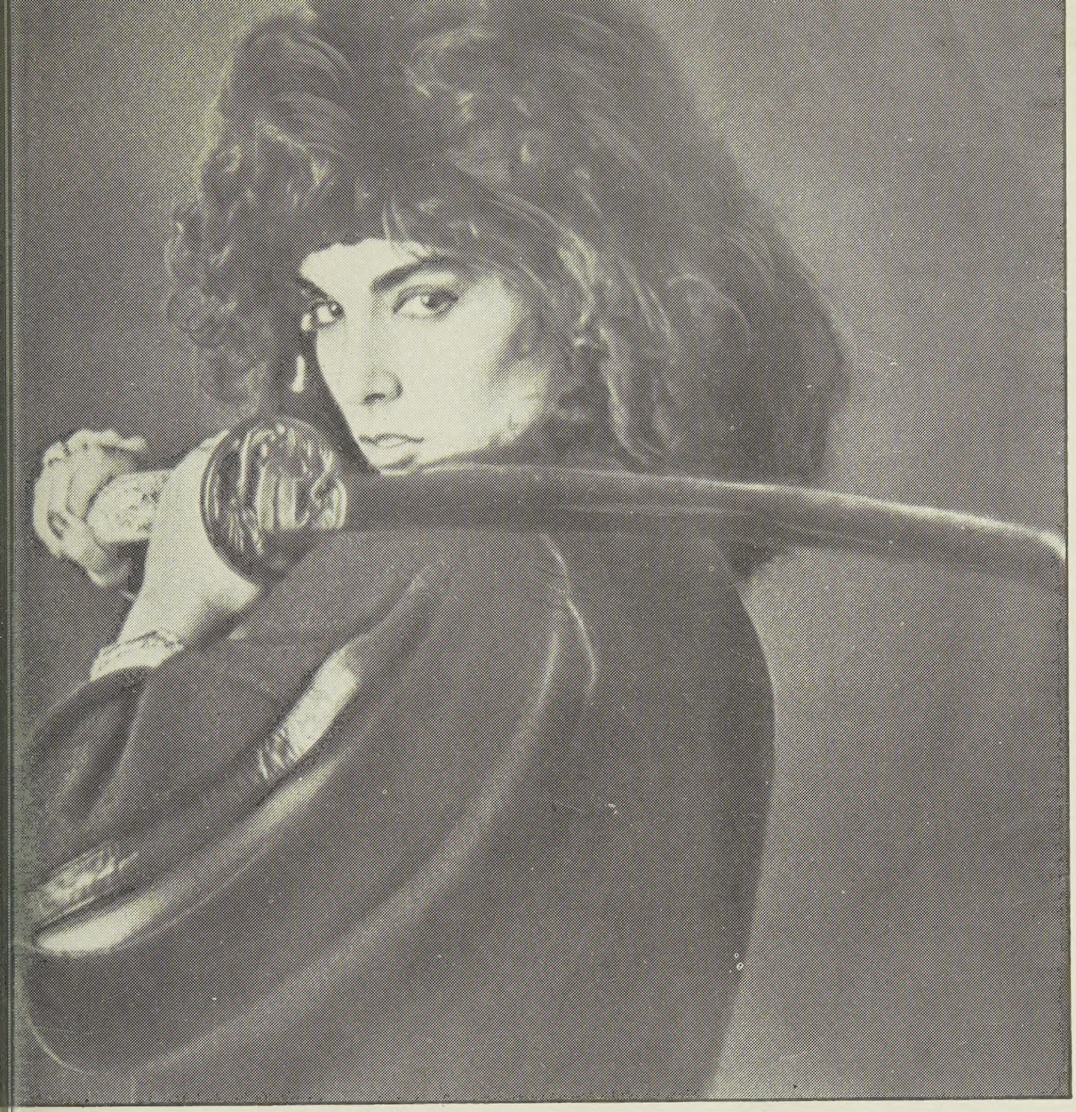
Work on video clips is a creative process in its own right. There are different approaches to making clips. Sometimes it might be a genre scene illustrating a song. Sometimes it might be a fantasy inspired by the music. And sometimes a dance routine and the singing of the performer is enough to make a clip.

In any case, making a clip entails intensive effort by dozens of people. It can be compared with making a film. The only difference is that a clip has a screening time of a few minutes in which a great deal has to be expressed. Great demands are made on clips in Britain. They should be original, vivid, and memorable in order to survive competition.

I was delighted by the invitation to tour the U.S.S.R. The hope that I would be understood here made me very happy. I am sure that people here will understand me. Not knowing English isn't important. Language is no barrier to music.

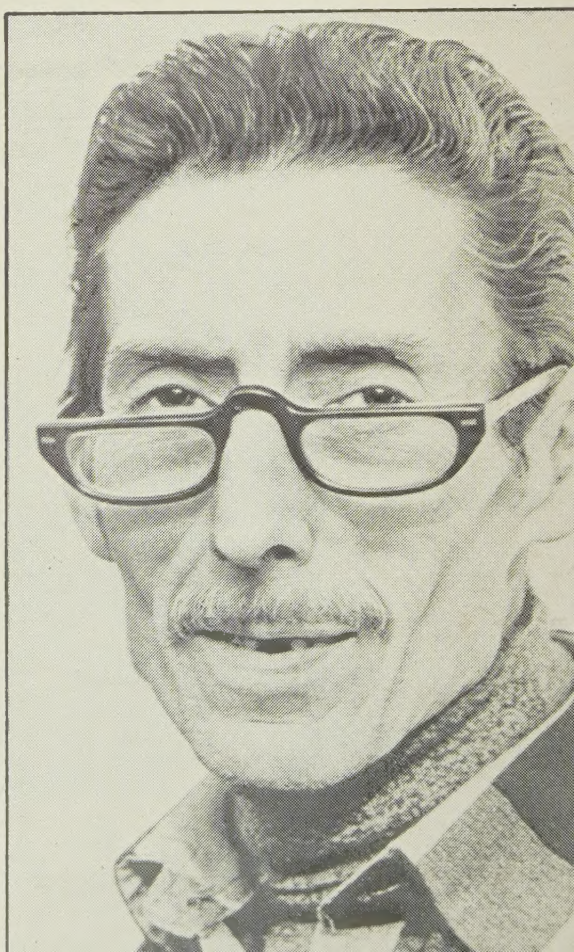
IRINA LAGUNINA

Photo by Sergei Bermenyev



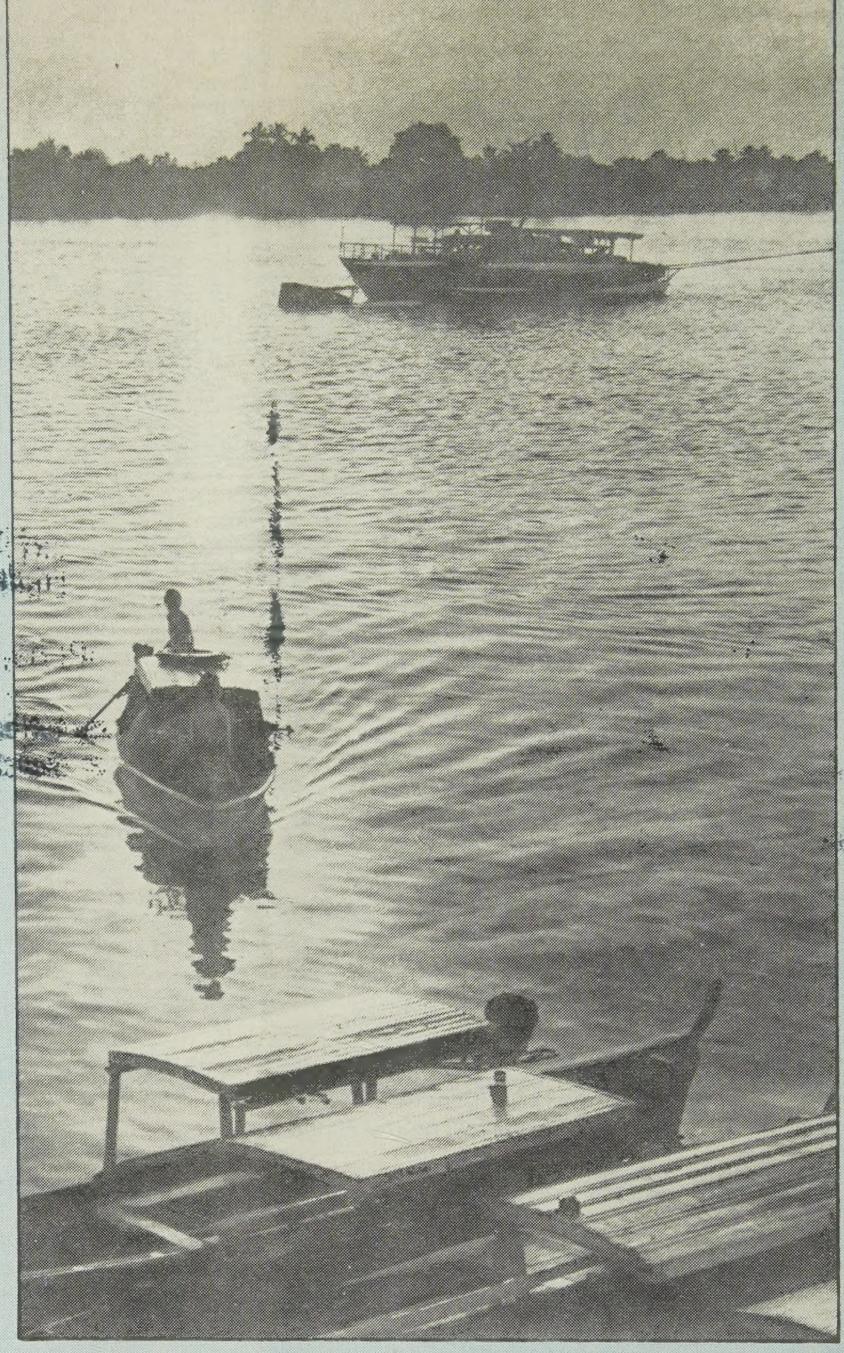
Perennial subject

Chiaroscuro, bold colours
and soft nuances.
Faces—tired, indifferent, happy.
Spanish photography
resembles Spanish painting.
The same perception
of the world, but through
a different medium. Multiple
planes are difficult to achieve.
It is still harder though to make
the photograph reveal
the author's uniquely personal
approach. Servando Carmona's
portraits show ordinary men
and women calmly looking
the camera in the eye;
the somewhat monotonous
static composition enables
one warmly to comprehend
the stuff of which these
unknown people are made.
Angel Duerto Oteo's night-bound
landscapes are distinguished
by their chiaroscuro,
taking us into the wonderland
of his imagination.
In picturesque quality they
are akin to the photographs
of Jordi Molet i Ingles.
In short, each photograph
is a reflection of the human
being with his hidden ego
and his desire for happiness
and serenity.



Reproductions of photographs taken by Luis Leandro Serrano, Vicente Peiro Asensio and Ramon Mestres Miquel.

Dong Duc Thanh
(Vietnam)



River.

Madonna.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

THE EARTH — OUR COMMON HOME

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